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NORTH VIEW OF WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THE  
COMPANION  
TO  
WESTMINSTER ABBEY;

CONTAINING

AN ACCURATE HISTORY OF THIS VENERABLE BUILDING; A DESCRIPTION OF ITS ANTIQUITIES AND ARCHITECTURAL BEAUTIES; A CRITICAL ACCOUNT OF THE VARIOUS WORKS OF ART IT CONTAINS; FULL PARTICULARS OF THE CORONATION CEREMONIES PERFORMED WITHIN ITS WALLS; AND MEMOIRS OF ALL THE EMINENT POETS WHO HAVE MONUMENTS ERECTED TO THEIR MEMORY IN THE EDIFICE.

BY J. S. DALTON.

London:

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TO

JOHN ALLISTON, ESQ.

MASTER OF THE MERCHANT TAILORS' COMPANY,  
GOVERNOR OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL,  
&c., &c., &c.



SIR,

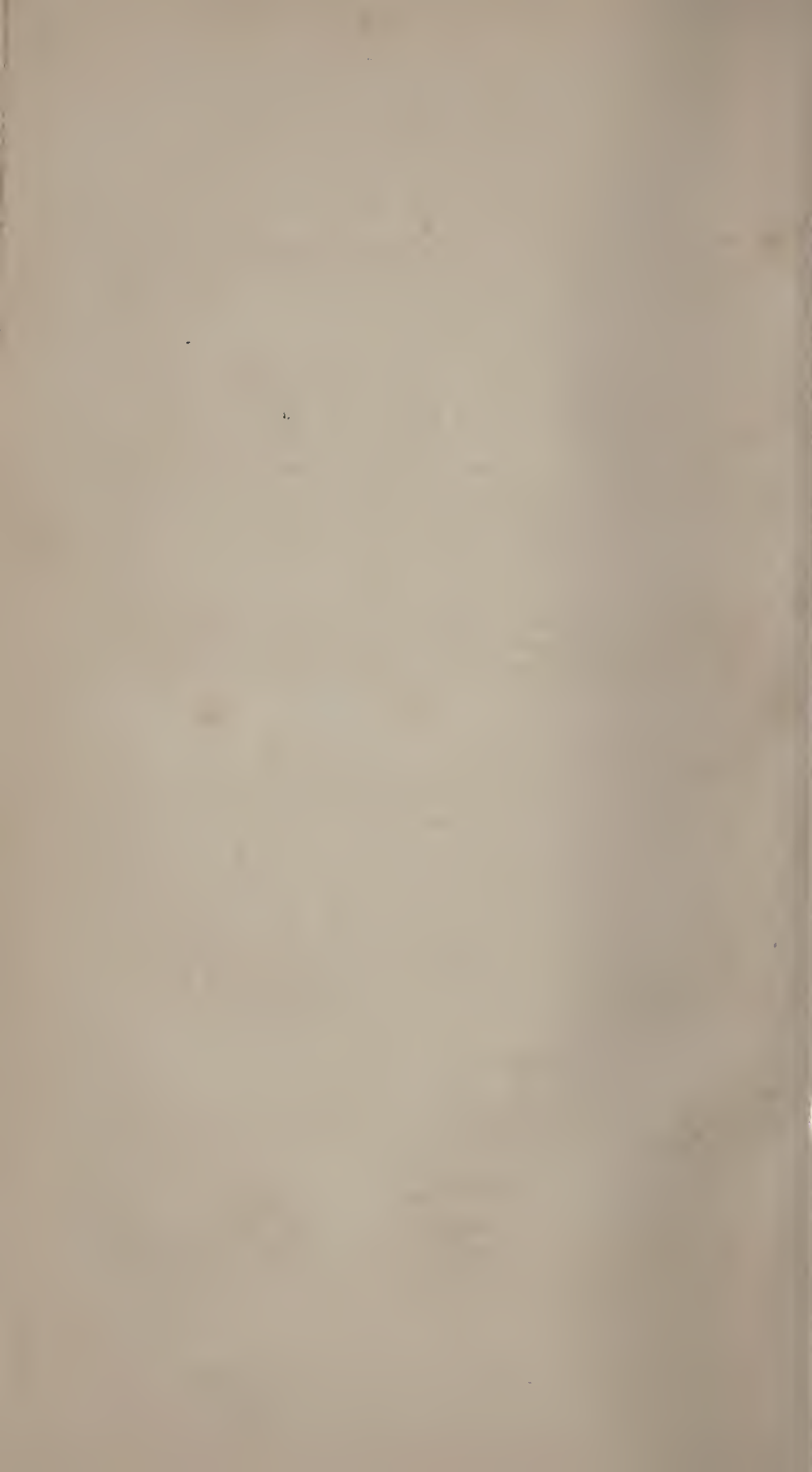
THE lively interest you take in everything connected with the preservation of the ancient Institutions of this country, induces me to hope, that the attempt I have made in this work, to present in a popular form an account of the beauties and antiquities of the most venerable ecclesiastical edifice in the kingdom, will meet with your approbation.

Should the work which I have now the honor of dedicating to you, be the means of even slightly contributing to your amusement, it will amply recompense me for any trouble I may have taken in preparing it, as it will be a slight return for the kindness, for which I am,

Your obliged,

And faithful Servant,

JOHN S. DALTON.



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## INTRODUCTION.



OF the numerous public buildings in this metropolis there are none of greater importance, or more interesting to the visitor, whether he visit it for the purpose of antiquarian research, or merely to gratify a laudable curiosity, than WESTMINSTER ABBEY. It is one of the most ancient edifices in the kingdom, and has been connected, either directly or indirectly, with all the great changes, religious, political, and social, that have taken place in the character and manners of the people of this country during the last five centuries. It has been within the Abbey that the imposing ceremonies connected with the Coronations of all the Sovereigns who have reigned since the conquest have been performed; and the funeral obsequies of not a few of them have likewise been celebrated in the Abbey. It is the place where the first printing press was set up, and from whence the first printed book ever published in this country was issued; it has been a place of refuge for kings and princes in times of trouble; and it has suffered with them from the disorders of rebellion, and been enriched in times of national prosperity. From these circumstances it cannot fail of being highly interesting to the visitor. But it has perhaps a still stronger claim on his attention, from its being the place in which are contained the monuments of the greatest men this country has produced, and whose glorious names must ever excite the warmest feelings of patriotism in the breast of every Englishman who feels an attachment to his country. In Westminster Abbey we have the monuments of our most profound philosophers—our acutest metaphysicians—our sweetest poets—the most eminent learned men who have enlightened and enriched us by their labours—and many of

the bravest warriors who have defended the liberties of our country and guarded her prosperity. If we look around we perceive the names of such a galaxy of genius and learning as cannot be found assembled on any other spot on earth. The contemplation of these monuments must be attended with pleasure, and we trust the work now offered to the reader will tend to make it more enduring. "I know," says Addison, "that entertainments of this nature are apt to raise dark and dismal thoughts in timorous minds and gloomy imaginations ; but for my own part, though I am always serious, I do not know what it is to be melancholy ; and can therefore take a view of nature in her dark and solemn scenes with the same pleasure as in her most gay and delightful ones. By this means I can improve myself with those objects which others consider with terror. When I look upon the tombs of the great, every emotion of envy dies in me ; when I read the epitaphs of the beautiful, every inordinate desire goes out ; when I meet with the grief of parents upon a tombstone, my heart melts with compassion ; when I see the tombs of the parents themselves, I consider the vanity of grieving for those whom we must quickly follow ; when I see kings lying by those who deposed them—when I consider rival wits placed side by side, or the holy men that divided the world with their contests and disputes, I reflect with sorrow and astonishment on the bitter competitions, factions, and debates of mankind. When I read the several dates of the tombs, of some that died yesterday, and some six hundred years ago, I consider that great day when we shall all of us be cotemporaries, and make our appearance together."

Independent of the pleasing associations connected with the Abbey, from such circumstances as the foregoing, it cannot fail to be exceedingly interesting to the visitor of taste, from its being a magnificent specimen of architectural beauty in the Gothic style. In this respect it is unrivalled, and has been justly characterized as "the wonder of the world."

It is somewhat surprising, considering the attraction the Abbey offers to the visitor, that no popular work has yet

appeared which, while it pointed out the principal objects of interest that might be seen on a cursory view of the Abbey, should direct the attention to some of the historical events connected with many of the monuments, &c. and thus "through the eye instruct the mind." As no book of this kind has yet been published, and as it is thought such a one cannot fail to meet with public approbation, particularly at a time when Westminster Abbey is about to become the interesting scene of her Majesty's coronation, the following attempt to supply the deficiency is submitted to the public.

In order to show the connection of the Abbey with the changes that have taken place in society since its erection, an historical account is given in the first chapters of the work, of the various important events that have occurred in which it has been concerned. To render this portion interesting as well as instructive, the manners and customs of the people at the time these events happened have been given, and any curious information bearing upon this point has been collected with care. Thus, besides an historical account of the Abbey, the reader will to a certain extent become acquainted with the history of the country also.

The historical description forms the first portion of the work ; the second is devoted to a description of the beauties and antiquities of the Abbey. Under this head will be found an account of all that is most interesting as specimens of the skill of the sculptor, or the art of the architect and beautifier. As some of the finest specimens of monumental sculpture are also to be found here, this portion of the book will probably not be the least interesting ; and in order that as few of the beauties as possible should escape the notice of the visitor, the criticisms of judges, qualified to pronounce judgment on works of art, are interspersed, which it is hoped will give a degree of interest to many of the monuments that otherwise would not be felt.

The remaining portion of the book is occupied in giving a slight sketch of some of the principal persons whose monuments are placed within the sacred edifice. In arranging the materials for these memoirs care has been taken to col-



lect as many facts and anecdotes as possible, to illustrate the state of the people of this country at the time the individual lived whose biography is given, and thus not merely to exhibit his character, but that of the people also. By this means the sketches, though not long of themselves, bear a certain relation to each other which it is hoped will give them an additional interest. As far as practicable, also, the poets have their peculiar styles illustrated, by extracts from their works ; and on the whole, notwithstanding the biographies are necessarily brief memorials of the great men's lives they record, yet they contain all the more important events in which the subjects of them were engaged, and offer bright examples for the imitation of both young and old.

Thus, to a certain extent at least, the public is provided with a book, which, besides containing all that can be required by the visitor when passing round the Abbey, offers matter for his consideration relating to the objects he has reviewed, that cannot fail to give them an additional degree of interest. The illustrations to the work will also recal them to his recollection at a future time, as they now beautifully illustrate the letter-press description.

As this work is intended merely as a popular Guide to the Abbey, in the way described, and has no pretensions to rank with the very elaborate antiquarian treatises that have been published on the subject, it is hoped that any few errors of description that may be found in it will be treated with indulgence, and that the work on the whole will not be deemed unsatisfactory, as a description of one of the finest Abbeys in the kingdom.

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# COMPANION

TO

## WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

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### CHAPTER I.

Foundation of the Abbey.—Ancient Legend respecting it.—Legal Rights of the Monks in consequence.—Cause of King Edgar Endowing the Abbey.—Rebuilt by Edward the Confessor.—Relics belonging to it; and Superstitious Reverence paid them.

THE time when WESTMINSTER ABBEY was founded is involved in much obscurity. Previous to the conversion of the Saxons, who occupied this country in the sixth century, the period when Christianity was introduced, a temple, dedicated to Apollo, one of the heathen gods of our ancestors, stood on the same spot as the present Abbey. Pope Gregory having however sent over missionaries, and converted the people from Paganism to Christianity, this temple was pulled down, and a church erected in its stead. The place on which it stood was called Thorny Island, or the Island of Thorns, from its being a piece of marsh land, surrounded by the river Thames, and overspread with thorns. The River was not at that day as it is now, confined within a certain channel, but at high tide used frequently to inundate the surrounding land for a considerable distance on either side of its banks; and this little island of thorns was the only spot adjacent that remained uncovered by the water. From the roof of the northern tower of the Abbey, the eye may even now very distinctly trace this

Island. Following the winding of the Thames round Milbank we perceive it ends in a marsh, filled with reeds and aquatic plants, at the extremity of what used to be called the Ranelagh Gardens, a place of public amusement of much celebrity, a few years ago. From that place to Chelsea Waterworks, the land is equally low and wet, exclusive of the creek or canal for barges. This brings the eye almost to the gates of St. James's Palace, where a valley nearly in a line with the marsh contains the canal. From this description, the island appears to have been of an angular form.

At the present day the condition of the country is so very different, that we can hardly form a just idea of the difficulties which must have attended the erection of a church on such a spot as Thorny Island; and we need not be surprised, therefore, that the superstitious and ignorant people of those days endeavoured to account for the manner in which these difficulties had been overcome, by supposing that Divine agency had been employed. It was about the year 604 that Sebert, who was King of the East Saxons, and had been converted to Christianity, wishing to show the sincerity of his faith, founded a church on Thorny Island, on the ruins of an heathen temple that had been thrown down by an earthquake, from which it would appear that formerly this country was subject to the visitation of natural convulsions of this kind. King Sebert dedicated his church to St. Peter, and it was to have been consecrated by the Bishop Miletus. The monkish writers, however, assert that this was prevented by the following miraculous event. St. Peter resolved to consecrate the church in person, and accordingly descended with a host of heavenly choristers on the Surrey side of the river, one stormy night, and prevailed on Edric, a poor fisherman, to row him over to the island, when he performed the ceremony of consecration, amidst a grand chorus of heavenly music, and a glorious appearance of heavenly light. The fisherman then conveyed the saint safely back, who directed him to inform the bishop what he had seen, and, as a proof, presented him with the droppings of the wax candles by which the

fisherman had seen the church illuminated. The saint also directed him to fling out his nets, and rewarded him with a miraculous draught of salmon, and at the same time promised him that neither he nor his successors should ever want plenty of salmon for their nets, provided they presented a tenth of what they took to the priests of the new church.

It is truly astonishing how such absurdity as this could obtain credit from men enjoying the blessings of reason, but such was the case, and for many centuries afterwards a tenth of the fishermen's produce was scrupulously paid to the church ; on the faith of this legend, even so late as the year 1231, the monks of Westminster Abbey brought an action against the minister of Rotherhithe, and compelled him to give them one-half of the tithe of all salmon caught in his parish ! The fisherman, however, had certain privileges granted to him that partially compensated for the loss of his fish. " He had a right to sit at the same table with the prior ; and he might demand of the cellarman ale and bread ; the cellarman in return might take of the fishes tail as much as he could, with four fingers and his thumb erect." From such ridiculous mummery and barbarous practices the reformation has in a great measure relieved us ; but such fabulous stories as this, are often the only records of the primitive monasteries and their usages, as it was generally the interest of the monks, at that time, to keep the people in ignorance of the truth.

After the death of Sebert, the founder of the abbey, his sons, who succeeded him, relapsed into Paganism, and renounced the Christian faith ; and shortly after this the Danes, who were also heathens, having invaded this country, the church was entirely destroyed. Things continued thus till the accession of Edgar to the English throne. Several eminent and religious kings had reigned in the interum, of whom Alfred might be mentioned as an illustrious example ; but, in consequence of the unceasing wars in which they were engaged, both with their own nobles, as well as with foreign enemies, few opportunities occurred for the domestic improvement of the country. Edgar, however, having been placed on the throne almost



entirely through the influence of the monks and their chief, Dunstan, rewarded their exertions on his behalf by presenting many rich gifts to the church, and founding monasteries. At the suggestion of Dunstan he again rebuilt the church on the site of the present Abbey, and appropriating it to the order of St. Benedict, endowed it with many valuable possessions. It may be mentioned that such was the course generally adopted by cruel and oppressive men of that time, as a propitiation for the crimes they committed. The clergy benefited by such proceedings, and hence they encouraged, rather than repressed them. A man would then frequently gratify his revenge by committing murder, knowing that if he could escape punishment from the law, which was not very difficult for a rich and powerful man at that period, that he could purchase absolution from the monks, by liberally bestowing on them rich gifts and possessions of land. And it was the law, that whatever was given to the church, could never be taken from it again. This was the cause of its amassing such immense wealth, that at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries, in the reign of Henry VIII., it is said their annual receipts were at least a twentieth of the whole national income. The foundation of the church by Edgar, it is not improbable, was in consequence of the murder of his former friend and favourite, Ethelwald, either by the king's own hand, or by his command. The circumstances attending this transaction are curious. Edgar, it is said, having heard that the Earl of Devonshire was possessed of a daughter of surpassing beauty, sent his favourite, Ethelwald, to see the lady, and ascertain if such was the fact, previous to his making proposals to her father for marriage. Ethelwald accordingly obeyed the king's directions, but was so struck by the beauty of the lady, who was named Elfrida, that he wooed her himself, obtained her father's consent, and married her privately. Fearing, however, the displeasure of the king, he kept his marriage secret, and represented to Edgar that the lady was far from being the beautiful woman common report had described her. He shortly afterwards solicited the king's permission to



espouse her himself, and having obtained it, the king suspecting no fraud, they were publicly married with great ceremony in the country. Ethelwald studiously kept his wife from court, lest her beauty should attract the attention of the king, and he become aware of the deceit that had been practised on him ; but by some means he became acquainted with the fact, and resolved to be revenged. Shortly afterwards he took occasion to visit that part of the country where Elfrida resided, and desired Ethelwald, who accompanied him, to introduce him to her. The favourite in vain attempted to prevent the catastrophe he foresaw ; he could only obtain permission to ride on before and inform his wife of the king's approach. He did so, and at the same time confessed the deceit he had practised in order to make her his wife. He intreated her to conceal her beauty as much as possible from Edgar, to preserve him from the punishment he would otherwise certainly incur, and Elfrida promised obedience ; but being naturally an ambitious, cruel woman, as was afterwards proved by her directing the assassination of her son-in-law, Edward the Martyr, in order to promote the succession of her son, Ethelred, she adopted every means to increase her attractions, in order to obtain the affections of Edgar. In this she succeeded, and the king, in order to remove the only obstacle that stood between him and the gratification of his passion, procured, if he did not actually perpetrate, the murder of her husband, Ethelwald, while on a journey into Northumberland. Elfrida was then called to court, and married to the king. As an atonement for this crime, and to procure absolution from the church, Edgar founded several monasteries, amongst which was the one on Thorny Island, the Abbey of Westminster.

Till the time of Edward, commonly called the Confessor, little more was done to improve the Abbey that calls for particular notice ; but this monarch, who was as entirely under the direction of the monks as any who had proceeded him, resolved to show his veneration for the church by erecting an abbey that should be both an evidence of his piety, and of his architectural taste. The immediate

cause of his undertaking the work, however, was his having been absolved from a rash vow by Pope Lee the IX., on condition of his appropriating one-tenth of his property in "gold, silver, cattle, and all other possessions," for the rebuilding of the Abbey. It was commenced in 1049, and finished about the year 1065, in a magnificent manner, as we may easily believe, considering that not only one-tenth of the whole of the king's income was devoted to the work, but also, that the nobles vied with each other in forwarding so grand an undertaking. It was the first Abbey built in the form of a cross, those previously erected having been built without transepts. After this period, all abbeys and cathedrals were built in the form of a cross. The Abbey, when finished, was munificently endowed by the king and nobles, and was now one of the finest and richest in the kingdom. An important source of its revenue was the donations of devotees who visited the shrine; and a considerable sum was derived from the exhibition of the reliques that the monks had under their care. The monkish writers declare that amongst those reliques were part of the manger in which our Saviour was born: the frankincense offered to him by the Eastern Magi: a splinter of the table from which the last supper was taken: a crust of the bread that he blest: a slab of the wall of the prison in which he was confined: a shred of his undivided garment: fragments of the sponge dipped in hyssop which he sucked: the scourge with which he was tortured: and the lance by which his side was pierced!

The monkish legends also state that the pious Edward, the Confessor, presented to the church a portion of the milk, and some of the hair of the Virgin Mary: the beard of St. Peter: and half a jaw and three teeth of St. Anastasia! Whence he could possibly obtain these wonderful reliques, the legends do not think proper to inform us, and the people of those times were not so scrupulous as to require very strong proof; the word of the monks was all-sufficient.

At a subsequent period Henry III., presented a still more imposing relic, being, says an old chronicler, no less

than a precious vessel which had been sent him from the Holy Land, and was attested to inclose some of the *genuine blood* of our Saviour, which had trickled from his wounds at the crucifixion. The absurdities that attended the presentation of this “wondrous relic” to the Abbey, have been minutely recorded in history, and we quote a portion for the purpose of showing to what an extent superstition and absurdity could be carried under the garb of religious reverence. “Several weeks before the ceremony,” says Matthew Paris, “the king summoned his chief subjects to meet him at Westminster, that they might hear the most joyful news of a holy benefaction recently bestowed on the English from heaven. On the day appointed the great men assembled, and were informed in reply to their inquiries, that the king had received of the knights templars and hospitallers, a beautiful chrystalline vase, containing a portion of the blood of our Saviour, which he had shed on the cross for the salvation of mankind; the genuineness of the relic being testified under the seals of the Patriarch Robert of Jerusalem, and the archbishops, bishops, abbots, and other prelates of the Holy Land! The king then commanded that all the priests of London, habited in costly dresses, and bearing standards, crosses, and lighted tapers, should early in the morning of St. Edward’s day, the 3d Oct. 1247, reverently meet at St. Pauls. Thither the king himself came, and with the utmost veneration receiving the vase, with the treasure of Christ’s blood, already mentioned, he bore it openly before him (preceded by the richly dressed priests), walking slowly in a humble garb, and without stopping, to the church of Westminster. He held the vase with both hands, keeping his eyes fixed on the vessel, or looking up to heaven, whilst proceeding along the dirty and uneven road. But a pall was held over him on four spears, and two persons supported his arms lest the fatigue should be too great for him. Near the gate of the Bishop of Durham’s hall, in the Strand, he was met by the members of the Convent of Westminster, with the bishops, abbots, and monks singing and rejoicing, with tears, in the holy spirit, who accompanied the proces-



sion to the church, which could scarcely contain the assembled multitude. The king, untired, carried the vase round the palace and the monastery, and then delivered it, as an invaluable present, to the church of St. Peter, and the brethren administering therein to the honour of God."

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## CHAPTER II.

Abbey again Rebuilt.—Translation of St. Edward's remains.—Time of the Completion of different parts of the Building.—Mode of obtaining Workmen.—Wages paid them.—Remaining portion of the Building Erected,—Henry the Seventh's Chapel begun.—Injuries committed by Soldiers of the Commonwealth.—Repaired by Sir Christopher Wren and Mr. Wyatt.

IN the year 1220, Henry the III. laid the first stone of a new chapel in honour of the Virgin Mary, but little was done till the year 1245, when the king resolved entirely to rebuild the Abbey. This was accomplished in a splendid manner. The expense incurred during the years 1245 and 1261, on the chapel, for the Virgin alone, amounted to upwards of 29,605*l.* of our money.

Mr. Hallam, in his History of Europe during the middle ages, states, that "we may consider any given sum under Henry III., as equivalent in general command over commodities, to about twenty-four, or twenty-five times their nominal value at present;" we can therefore easily imagine how great a sum was the amount expended on the Abbey at that period. The whole of the Abbey was not completed during the life of Henry III., but when the chapel in honour of the Virgin Mary was finished, he resolved to remove to it the remains of Edward the Confessor, which had formerly lain in another part of the Abbey. William the Conqueror had previously bestowed on the tomb a rich pall, and the shrine had always been highly revered. An old writer describing the translation of St. Edward's bones to the new shrine, speaks as



follows. "In sight of all the principal nobility and gentry of the land who were assembled here, he (the king) and his brother, Richard, carried the chest containing St. Edward's remains, upon their shoulders with vast ceremony. On seeing it exalted, the devils were instantly cast out of two possessed persons who had come purposely (the one from Ireland, the other from Winchester), to receive that benefit." The anniversary of St. Edward's translation was for a long time afterwards observed by the corporation and the principal citizens.

In the year 1297 the Abbey was much injured by fire, but was shortly afterwards repaired by the abbot; and in the course of the next century many additions were made. The Eastern part of the nave and aisles were rebuilt and finished in 1307, during the reign of Henry III., and Edward I. During the reigns of Edward II., Edward III., and Richard II., the abbot's house, the cloisters, and principal monastic buildings were erected. The abbot under whose direction this principally took place, died in the year 1386; consequently the buildings still remaining are between four and five hundred years old.

Not the least difficult task in restoring the Abbey was to procure a sufficient number of experienced workmen for the purpose. In order to effect this, it was customary to impress artizans into the king's service, in the same manner as sailors are pressed to man our ships of war during our contests with foreign nations. In such cases, the king issued a writ commanding the sheriffs of the different counties and cities to seize all good artizans, qualified to perform the particular kind of work required to be done, and cause them to attend where the king might desire them. The following writ is extant among several others to the same purport. It was for the purpose of providing painters for Westminster Hall, and was directed, "From the king to all and singular the sheriffs, &c., greeting. Know ye, that we have appointed our beloved William de Walsyngham to take so many *painters* in our City of London, (the fee of the church excepted), as may be sufficient for our works in St. Stephen's Chapel, within our Palace of

Westminster, and to bring them to our palace aforesaid, for our works, *at our wages*, there to remain as long as may be requisite : and giving him authority to arrest all who shall oppose or prove rebellious in this matter, and commit them to our prisons until we shall have otherwise ordered their punishment. And therefore we command you that you be assisting the said William, in executing and fulfilling all things before mentioned, with your aid and counsel, as often and in the manner in which by the said William on our account you may be required." It appears that the wages given by the king were sometimes much less than the workmen were willing to receive, and in consequence they frequently absconded from their employment. In the reign of Edward III. several writs were issued by the king, directed to the sheriffs, commanding them "to arrest all such artificers as had deserted the king's service in search of better wages," and subjecting their employers to the forfeiture of their property. The wages of workmen towards the close of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries were as follows:—Superior masons had 6d. per day, and the wages of others varied from 4d. to 5d. a-day. The wages of a principal smith was 6d. a day ; of carpenters from 4½d. to 6d. ; plumbers had from 4½d. to 6d. ; and tilers had 5d. per day. Inferior labourers did not receive more than 2½d. a-day, and often not so much as that. The painters, or, decorators appear to have received the higher rate of wages, some of them receiving as much as 14d. a day. These sums will appear very trifling when compared with the rate of wages at the present time ; but it must be remembered that the value of money was much greater then than it is now. Indeed, Mr. Hallam, in his History of Europe, before mentioned, makes the following observations on this subject. "There is one very unpleasing remark," says he, "which every one who attends to the subject of prices will be induced to make, that the labouring classes, especially those engaged in agriculture, were better provided with the means of subsistence in the reign of Edward III., or Henry VI., than they are at present. In the fourteenth century,

Sir John Cullum observes, a harvest-man had 4d. a-day, which enabled him in a week to buy a comb of wheat; a man must now (1784) work ten or twelve days. So under Henry VI., if meat was at a farthing and a half the pound, which I suppose was about the truth, a labourer earning 3d. a day, or 1s. 6d. per week, could buy a bushel of wheat at 6s. the quarter, and twenty-four pounds of meat for his family. A labourer at present earning 12s. a-week, can only buy half a bushel of wheat at 4l. the quarter, and twelve pounds of meat at 7d." Artizans and workmen of all kinds were not so numerous then as they are at present.

Between the years 1340 and 1483, including the reigns of Edward III., Richard II., Henry IV., Henry V., Henry VI., Edward IV., and Edward V., further additions were made to the Abbey, and the western part of the nave and aisles were rebuilt. The circumstance of these alterations of the Abbey having occupied so long a period of time, may be accounted for by the fact, that the sovereigns had but little money to spare for ecclesiastical purposes; and that they were engaged during nearly the whole of that period in civil wars or foreign invasions. The war between the houses of York and Lancaster—the Red and White Roses—was at its height, and the strong stimulus that excited former sovereigns to works of this description—the absolution for crimes—was beginning to be less cared for or respected.

The west front, and great window, were built during the reigns of Richard III., and Henry VII.; and the great west window was afterwards rebuilt during the reigns of George I. and George II.

The "Wonder of the World," as it has been called, Henry the Seventh's Chapel, was commenced by that monarch shortly after he had become firmly seated on the throne, and as he intended it to be the future burial-place of himself and his successors, he spared no pains to render it a perfect and beautiful piece of architecture. That he was successful every succeeding age has borne witness, and it is, perhaps, one of the finest specimens of the Gothic



style in the world. It was erected on the site of the chapel to the blessed Virgin, that was built by Henry III., and the honour of designing the building is due to an unknown artist. The first stone was laid by the Bishop Islip, on the 24th January, 1502 ; but the chapel was not perfectly finished during the reign of Henry VII. It was completed by Henry VIII., although that monarch on the dissolution of the monasteries did not spare the revenues of the Abbey. The total amount expended on the building exceeded 14,000*l.*, at that time a most enormous sum.

From this time forward, for a considerable period, little appears to have been done towards beautifying or repairing the Abbey. It was deprived of the greater part of its income by Henry the VIIIth., and the monks were consequently unable to do anything towards its restoration.

The Revenues of the Abbey in the year 1539, when it was suppressed, amounted, according to Speede, to no less a sum than 3,976*l.* per annum, which is at least equal to 20,000*l.* a-year of our present money. Besides its furniture, which was of inestimable value, it had in different parts of the kingdom no less than two hundred and sixteen manors, seventeen hamlets, with ninety-seven towns and villages ; and though the Abbey was only second in rank, it was in all other respects the chief one in the kingdom, and its abbots had a seat in the House of Lords.

After the execution of Charles I., the popular fury was directed against all religious edifices, with their monuments and shrines, that could in any way contribute to keep alive a feeling of respect for the Catholic church, by whom they were erected ; and Westminster Abbey did not escape the spoliation of the times. In the year 1643, it was converted into *barracks* for the soldiers of the parliament, during the civil war between Charles I. and the people ; and many of the beautiful tombs and images that adorned the different chapels of the Abbey, were mutilated or destroyed. It is recorded that some of the soldiers who were quartered in the Abbey, broke the rails about the altar, and burnt them ; pulled down the organ, pawned the pipes at ale-



houses for drink, and made a portion of the Abbey a pot-house, where they ate, drank, smoked, and committed many similar outrages.

Little was done towards repairing the injuries that time and violence had effected, until the reign of William III. Queen Mary had restored it to its ancient conventual state on her accession ; and Queen Elizabeth had again ejected the monks, but neither had done anything towards restoring the building itself. In the time of William and Mary, the condition of the Abbey was brought under the notice of parliament, and a grant was obtained for the purpose of repairing it at the expense of the nation. Sir Christopher Wren was appointed to carry this object into effect, and under his direction, every part was thoroughly repaired and beautified. Two new towers at the western end of the Abbey were begun and completed during the reigns of George I. and George II., and although, perhaps, their appearance may be somewhat heavy, they yet add considerably to the architectural beauty of the building. In the year 1803, the roof of the choir was much injured by fire, but was shortly afterwards repaired ; and in the year 1809, Mr. Wyatt commenced beautifying the whole of the exterior of Henry the Seventh's chapel ; it has since been completed at an expense of 42,000/.

Having thus briefly described the various improvements and alterations that have been made in the Abbey from the earlier periods to the present time, it will be proper, before closing this historical account, briefly to notice some of the Coronation ceremonies, and other remarkable events that have taken place within the walls of this ancient edifice.

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## CHAPTER III.

Coronations of different Sovereigns.—Crowning of Henry the Second's Son.—Funerals of various Monarchs, and of Oliver Cromwell.—Establishment of Caxton's Printing-Press.—Musical Celebration of Handel's Birth.—Reflections on concluding the History of the Abbey.

AFTER William the Conqueror had obtained the decisive victory at Hastings, over the brave but unfortunate Harold, he made it one of his first cares on his arrival in London, to give thanks for his success at King Edward's tomb, in the Abbey. And it would seem from a passage in William of Malmsbury, the "better to ingratiate himself with the English," by displaying a veneration for the Confessor's memory, he fixed on the church for the scene of his own coronation; and accordingly, on the Christmas-day following, he was crowned by the side of Edward's tomb. William had taken care that a number of his followers, and others favourable to his interests, should be present at the ceremony; and when the people were asked, as was then the form, whether they would accept him as their king, these mercenaries replied in the affirmative with so much noise and vociferation, that it was thought by some of the Norman soldiers, that the people had revolted and slain the king. Upon this, the Normans who were in the City, immediately set fire to it in different places, and commenced pillaging it. This event, though not of much importance in itself, as the tumult was soon repressed, laid the foundation for that bitter enmity which afterwards existed between the people and their invaders. William Rufus was crowned in the Abbey on Sunday, 26th September, 1087. Henry I. was also crowned here on Sunday, the 5th August, 1100; likewise Stephen, on St. Stephen's Day, 1135; and Henry II. underwent the same ceremony on Sunday, the 19th Dec., 1154. In the year 1170, a coronation of a somewhat curious description took place here. Henry II. having obtained leave of a general assem-

bly of his principal subjects at Windsor, had his eldest son, Henry, crowned king in the Abbey church. This ceremony appears to have taken place at the request of the son, whose subsequent ingratitude was a base return for his father's kindness. Holinshed, in his chronicles, fully describes the coronation, and the particular circumstances attending it. "The Coronation feast was held in the great Hall at Westminster, and King Henry, the father, upon that day, served his sonne at the table as sewer (or waiter), bringing up the bore's head with trumpets before it, according to the manner. Whereupon the young man, conceiving a pride in his heart, beheld the standers by with a more stately countenance than he had wont; the Archbishop of York, who sat by him, marking his behaviour, turned to him, and said, 'Be glad, my good sonne, there is not another prince in the world that hath such a sewer at his table;' to this the new king answered, as it were disdainfullie, thus: 'Why doost thou marvell at that? My father, in doing it, thinketh it no more than becommeth him; he, being born of princely blood onlie on the mother's side, serveth me that am a king borne, having both a king to my father, and a queen to my mother.' Thus the young man of an evill and perverse nature, was puffed up in pride by his father's unseemlie dooinge." The young prince did not live to enjoy the crown; but having rebelled against his father, was obliged to fly from England, and soon after died on the continent.

Richard I. was crowned in the Abbey, on Sunday, the 3rd September, 1189, and the ceremony was unfortunately distinguished by a massacre of the Jews. Richard had given orders that none of them should be allowed to approach the Abbey while the solemnity was being performed, "for feare of the enchantments that were wont to be practised;" but some of the principal Jews having failed to observe the injunction, the people committed great outrages upon their persons, and the Londoners slew many of them within the City, and burnt their houses.

Richard was twice crowned in the Abbey; for having undertaken a war against France, he was taken prisoner



and confined in that country for many years ; at last, however, he obtained his release, on payment of a heavy fine, and, returning to England, was again crowned at Westminster, in the year 1197.

The Coronations of all the other kings and queens of England, have taken place in Westminster Abbey ; and even where a monarch had been crowned previously in another part of the country, as in the case of Henry III., whose Coronation took place at Gloucester, it was thought proper to have the ceremony again performed at Westminster. The expense of the Coronation in this case was not of course so great as those of monarchs of a later period ; but the ceremony was always on a scale of great magnificence. Probably, the most expensive Coronation of late years, was that of George IV., which is said to have cost the country nearly 150,000*l*. This however did not excel, if indeed it equalled, the Coronation of Henry VIII. On this occasion, it is said, that the streets were railed, barred, and swept ; the fronts of the houses were adorned with tapestry and banners, and great part of the south of Cheapside was covered with cloth of gold. The proceedings within the Abbey were on an equal scale of magnificence. The different City companies were arranged on stages from Gracechurch-street, westward. The Goldsmiths had virgins clad in white placed before them, bearing burning tapers ; and numbers of priests in the rich vestments of the altar lined the way, some bearing crosses, and others burning incense before the royal pair.

Many of our monarchs have been buried in the Abbey, as we shall have to notice more at length when we come to speak of their tombs. Their funerals have been remarkable for little else than the extravagant profusion that generally accompanies public ceremonies, and therefore require no lengthened notice. It is different however with the funeral of Oliver Cromwell, who was buried here. He was interred in Henry VII's. chapel with great pomp and ceremony. The walls were hung with escutcheons, to the number of 240. The hearse had twenty-six large embossed shields ; twenty-four smaller, with crowns ; six



badges (his crest), and thirty-six scrolls, *with mottos suited to his merit*, placed on it. His effigies were carved and superbly arrayed; and a velvet pall of eighty yards, was borne over all. The subsequent proceedings that took place were little in accordance with all this pomp, or anticipated by those who took part in the proceedings. No sooner had Charles II. been restored to his crown, than he proceeded to punish all those who had been concerned in his father's death. And he carried his hostility even against the dead. He ordered the bodies of such of the judges of his father as had died, to be taken from their graves and hung. In pursuance of this order, the body of Cromwell was exhumed, and after having been treated with every species of indignity, it was hanged on a gallows erected at Tyburn.

If, however, Westminster Abbey has occasionally been the scene of such occurrences, it is likewise the spot on which the most powerful agent of human improvement produced its first effects in this country. The first printing-press established in England, was erected either in or close adjoining the Abbey, in some of its outbuildings, in the year 1471, by William Caxton. He was a mercer and citizen of London, but having in his travels abroad, and during his residence in Holland, Flanders, and Germany, in the affairs of trade, had an opportunity of informing himself of the whole method and progress of the art, and being patronized by many powerful persons, and particularly by the abbot of Westminster, on his return he set up a press in the Abbey, and began to print books. A book was discovered some years ago in the Archbishop of Canterbury's palace, with a date of its impression from Oxford, Anno 1468; but it is much doubted whether the book was original, and even if it should be so, Caxton, it is undenied, was the first person who used separate types, and is therefore entitled to all the honour of having first introduced the art in a way in which it could become useful amongst us. The book first printed in the Abbey was a treatise on the Game of Chess. Other works followed, but very slowly, Caxton having not only to print himself, but also to translate, compose, and perform all the varied occupations con-

nected with the art, that in the present day employ such an immense number of workmen and writers.

In addition to these events, the Abbey has also been the scene of the grandest musical performances that have ever taken place in this country. In 1784, exactly a century from the birth of Handel, the event was commemorated by a musical festival on a scale of great magnificence. We have described it more particularly in our notice of Handel. Several musical performances of a similar nature took place during the ensuing seven years, and in 1834, one, as nearly equalling the celebration of 1784 as possible, took place. Nearly 3000 persons were present; and the number employed in the full pieces, amounted to 591, including the vocal and instrumental performers.

Having now described the principal historical occurrences which have taken place within the Abbey, we shall pass on to an examination of objects that may be more immediately interesting—the antiquities and beauties of the Abbey. We cannot quit this portion of the subject, however, without reflecting for a moment on the great changes that have taken place in this country, since the erection of this structure; the alteration in religion; the change in the manners and customs of society, and in the condition of the people; their improvement by means of the press; and the complete transformation of the entire country from a state of gross barbarism, to that of high civilization. All this has occurred since the erection of the Abbey, and is intimately connected with its history, and even now, in its hale old age, it appears likely to withstand the inroad of time for an indefinite period. Washington Irving, after visiting the Abbey, gave publicity to some very beautiful reflections on the subject, which will form an appropriate commentary on its history. “I endeavoured,” says he, “to form some arrangement in my mind of the objects I had been contemplating, but found they were already falling into indistinctness and confusion. Names, inscriptions, trophies, had all become confounded in my recollection, though I had scarcely taken my foot off the threshold. What, thought I, is this vast assemblage of sepulchres but a trea-

sury of humiliation ; a high pile of reitirated homilies on the emptiness of renown, and the certainty of oblivion ! It is indeed the empire of death ; his great shadowy palace, where he sits in state, mocking at the relics of human glory, and spreading dust and forgetfulness on the monuments of princes. How idle a boast, after all, is the immortality of a name ! time is ever turning over his pages ; we are too much engrossed by the story of the present, to think of the characters and anecdotes that gave interest to the past, and each age is a volume thrown aside and speedily forgotten. The idol of to-day, pushes the hero of yesterday out of our recollection, and will in turn be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow." "Our fathers," says Sir Thomas Brown, "find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors." History fades into fable ; fact becomes clouded with doubt and controversy ; the inscription moulders from the tablet ; the statue falls from the pedestal ; columns, arches, pyramids, what are they but heaps of sand, and their epitaphs but characters written in dust ! What is the security of a tomb, or the perpetuity of an embalmment ? The remains of Alexander the Great have been scattered to the wind, and his empty sarcophagus is now the mere curiosity of a museum. The Egyptian mummies which Cambyzes or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth ; Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams.

What then is to ensure this pile which now towers above me, from sharing the fate of mightier mausoleums ? The time must come when its gilded vaults, which now spring so loftily, shall lie in rubbish beneath the feet ; when, instead of the sound of melody and praise, the wind shall whistle through the broken arches, and the owl hoot from the shattered tower ; when the garish sunbeam shall break into these gloomy mansions of death ; and the ivy twine round the fallen column, and the foxglove hang its blossoms about the nameless urn, as if in mockery of the dead. Thus man passeth away ; his name perishes from record and recollection ; his history is as a tale that is told, and his very monument becomes a ruin.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE ANTIQUITIES AND BEAUTIES OF THE ABBEY.

The Exterior of the Building.—Description of the North Side and Transept, by a writer a century ago.—Western Towers.—Curious manner in which South Side is supported.—Henry the Seventh's Chapel.

It is unfortunate that the exterior of Westminster Abbey, like many other public edifices, cannot be seen to advantage, in consequence of being surrounded by buildings that obstruct the view. It is built, as previously mentioned, in the form of a cross, but the original simplicity of the plan is somewhat injured by the number of small chapels added to the main building. Our frontispiece represents a view of the north side, but for the spectator the most favourable spot for observing it is the north-west; and the appearance of the northern transept, from this spot, cannot fail to interest the spectator, as a specimen of the extreme elegance and beauty of which the Gothic style of architecture is susceptible. It has always been regarded with admiration by those who have described the Abbey, and from having been the chief entrance, probably for centuries, possesses an additional claim to notice.

A writer, upwards of a century ago, thus described the appearance of the front elevation of the transept at that period. "On the north side this noble and lofty fabric is much deformed and defaced, partly by the many close adjacent buildings, but much more by the north winds, which, driving the caroding and piercing smoke of the sea-coals from the city that way, have so much impaired and changed her former beauties, that the remnants thereof are scarce sufficient to convince you of her excellency in former ages, were it not that that admirable portico, which is on this side, did give you some undeniable



idea of her ancient greatness. This portico has a most noble door, or portal, which leads you into the cross of the church, with two lesser porches on each side, one of which serves for the conveniency of entering therein. Its remnants, or ruins, sufficiently speak what a curious piece this portico has been in former times; for here were the statues of the twelve apostles at full length, with a vast number of other saints and martyrs, intermixed with intaglios, devices and abundance of fretwork, to add to the beauty thereof; but all much defaced and worn out by time and the caroding vapours of the sea-coals;\* and it is doubtless owing to its excellency, that some in former ages have bestowed upon it the title of "Solomon's Porch;" judging that a piece of work, far surpassing anything of that kind in those days, might very well challenge an uncommon name. The very remnants which are obvious to our sight, even to this day, may soon convince us of its ancient beauty and magnificence; for this portico still retains entire, below two of these admirable statues, besides three others quite defaced, and two more over the eastern part of the portico, and as many more over the western door, pretty entire, and all undeniable witnesses of their former excellency." Since this was written the northern entrance has been repaired and beautified. The grand buttresses above, with the pinnacles arising from thence, present a most imposing appearance; and the exquisite workmanship of the Great Rose Window complete the effect. This window is upwards of ninety feet in circumference, and the richness of the coloured glass of which it is formed, together with the delicate work of the sculptor, render it a noble work of art. It was rebuilt in the year 1722. Underneath is the great porch mentioned, which is of considerable depth, and contracts inwards. It is well deserving the attention of the lover of art.

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\* It may be mentioned as illustrating the antipathy which once existed against coals, that some time before the period when this author wrote, they were prohibited to be burnt in London, according to one writer, on pain of death. It is certain that persons burning them were guilty of a misdemeanor.

Passing round to the west, the two great towers will attract attention. They were formerly of unequal height, and were executed as they appear at present by Sir Christopher Wren. He has been accused of want of taste in constructing them, and it is said, that they contain faults which cannot be defended by any rules of architecture. However this may be, they undoubtedly give an air of grandeur to the Abbey, of which the want would soon be felt if they were removed. They are 225 feet in height. The window of the west transept, and the entrance porch, are also deserving of notice; the window is a very fine one, and can be seen to the greatest advantage from within in front of the screen.

The south side is much blocked up by buildings, but is remarkable for being supported the length of the cloisters by buttresses, which have their bases without the walls of the cloister; consequently it is only by their weight that they remain erect, and at the same time support the wall of the church by slender arches, whose insertions are so managed as to send the pressure downwards. This manner of contriving them was characterized by Sir Christopher Wren as the work of a bold but ignorant architect, and for the purpose of flattering the humour of the monks; but it is considered, the nature of the ground being very unfavourable, that it could hardly have been executed in a more skilful manner.

At the eastern extremity of the Abbey is situated the beautiful chapel of Henry VII. There is no other edifice in the kingdom, says Mr. Brayley, the antiquary, the external ornaments of which have been spread over its surface with such exuberant luxuriance as those of this chapel. It would seem, indeed, as though the architect had intended to give to stone the character of embroidery, and inclose his walls within the meshes of lace-work. With the exception of the Plinth, every part is covered with sculptural decorations; the buttress towers are crested by ornamental domes, and enriched by niches and elegant tracery; the cross springers are perforated into airy forms; and the very cornices and parapets are charged, even to

profusion, with armorial cognizances and knotted foliage. The vaulting and roof are supported by fourteen octagonal buttress towers, viz., six on each side, and two eastward; between which are thirteen lofty windows, those of the aisles being embowed, and those of the chapels projecting in three angles—the central angle forming an acute point. The buttress towers extend to a considerable height above the parapet, and are each crowned by an octagonal dome, of a graceful contour; having sockets springing up at every angle, and terminating in a richly crusted finial. An embattled cornice surrounds each dome, and at the angles are either a lion, a dragon, or a greyhound, in a descending attitude. Below these, in front of each side tower, are three canopied niches with pedestals for statues, and on each pedestal is a label, inscribed in black letter, with the name of some prophet, apostle, or saint. The canopies are gracefully formed and the drops are enriched with foliage. The flying buttresses, or cross springers, which extend over the side aisles and east end, from the base of the turrets, are most ingeniously contrived, not only to resist the immense pressure of the vaulting roof, but likewise to connect the parts of the buildings, and associate by their lightness and ornaments with the general mass. They are each pierced into circles and other forms, and the lion, the dragon, and the greyhound, are sculptured in full relief, as creeping down the weatherings. The windows which occupy a considerable space between the piers, are each divided into three tiers, and further divided at the apex by handsome tracery.

The foregoing particulars will give the reader some idea of the external appearance of this beautiful Abbey, and assist the visitor in examining the different parts. The exterior is seldom thought worthy of close inspection, but it is hoped sufficient has been described to prove that all the beauties are not only within the walls, and that a little time spent in examining the edifice on the outside, before entering it, will not be thrown away, or the trouble unrequited.

Before proceeding to describe the interior of the Abbey,



it will be proper to notice a building that once stood a little distance from it, but which has since been pulled down. This edifice was the Sanctuary, so celebrated in the earlier years of the history of our country; and although not existing at the present day, it has too many interesting occurrences connected with it, to be passed by without notice.

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## CHAPTER V.

**THE SANCTUARY.**—Origin of the custom.—Fines formerly inflicted for atrocious crimes.—Sanctuary at Durham.—The one at Westminster.—Its sacred character, and the first violation of it.—Infamy of Sanctuaries in later years.—Mode taken to suppress them.

THIS building formerly stood on the spot where the Court House, Westminster, is erected, and it claims to be noticed first amongst the antiquities of the Abbey, from the great importance that was originally attached to it. It was built by Edward the Confessor at the time he erected the Abbey, and was of very great strength. The custom of taking sanctuary has many interesting circumstances connected with it, and therefore the following short historical account will probably be acceptable.

From the earliest periods in the history of this country, to the time of the Reformation, it appears that the clergy were exempt from many kinds of punishment that were inflicted on other persons for particular offences; and the church was always held so sacred, that no one who sought its protection, even against the ministers of the law, could be taken from it by force. This was a custom not merely during the time the Catholic religion prevailed, subsequent to the conquest, but even before that period amongst the rude Saxons<sup>o</sup> themselves.

There can be little doubt but that this privilege of Sanctuary, as it was called, operated beneficially, or it would hardly have been continued for so long a period. In a rude state of society, before the law was firmly established, when every man's house was literally his castle, and his

personal strength frequently the only force on which he could rely for protection and justice, it is natural to suppose that feuds and bloodshed were occurrences of no very extraordinary nature. As the relations or friends of a person slain under such circumstances thought it a duty of paramount importance to pursue the homicide, until he was slain or made compensation, a place of refuge and concealment, till the anger of the pursuers had abated, or till recompense could be made, must evidently have been of much service.

The methods adopted in former times for the punishment of criminals differed materially from those of the present day ; human life was not held in so high estimation as at present, and there was no offence, the punishment for which could not be avoided for money. Murder, a crime considered by us one of the most heinous men can commit, was a common offence, and the criminal, if he could conceal himself till the desire for revenge of the friends of the murdered person had somewhat abated, could almost always provide for his safety by payment of a certain amount of money. Before the conquest a regular scale of prices was established, which, persons who caused the deaths of others should pay for the offence. The price of the king's head, was settled by King Edmund, at about 1,300*l.* of our present money ; a prince one-half ; a bishop or alderman one-fourth ; and the lower order of freemen a few shillings only. By the law of Kent, the price of the archbishop's head, was higher than that of the king's. These facts are stated on the authority of Hume, in his history of this country, where it is also recorded, that Edmund, in his preamble to his laws, ordained, that if any one committed murder, he might, with the assistance of his friends or kindred, pay within a twelvemonth the fine he had incurred for his crime. And that no criminal should be killed who flew to the Sanctuary or temple, or took refuge in any of the king's towns. In lapse of time these laws of course underwent great modifications, but still the Sanctuary or temple, was considered so sacred, that any one who dared to profane it, by killing a fugitive who had

sought its protection, was considered a greater criminal than the one who had taken refuge, and was generally excommunicated by the church. The privilege of Sanctuary, however, by degrees was confined to certain parts of the kingdom, although the altar of a church still retained its sacred character. One famous Sanctuary was at Durham, where two men lay in chambers over the north door, and when any offenders knocked they let them in and tolled a bell to give notice that some one had taken Sanctuary. They were dressed in black gowns with a yellow cross upon the shoulder. Those who took Sanctuary, lay upon a grate made for that purpose; they had meat, drink, and bedding for thirty-seven days, at the cost of the house. Numberless criminals availed themselves of the virtue of this place to avoid the rigour of the common law; for under the Saxon institutes unless a man made restitution or took Sanctuary, he suffered immediate punishment.

This Sanctuary was by no means, however, so celebrated as the one we have to describe more particularly, viz., that belonging to the Abbey of Westminster. Fosbroke, in his dictionary of antiquities, states that it was a singular double building, and there was an open place of punishment and reproof, where ill-behaving persons were put in the stocks, &c. Living in Sanctuary was very expensive, but persons who took refuge, generally did so only for a short time. Of the one belonging to the Abbey, persons of the highest rank have availed themselves. In the year 1470, the Queen of Edward IV. was obliged to fly to this place for protection, when a conspiracy had driven the king from the kingdom for a time; and within its precincts Edward V. was born.

Subsequently, when the Protector, afterwards Richard III., endeavoured to obtain possession of the young princes, Edward V., and his brother, their mother again sought the protection of the Sanctuary. On this occasion a remarkable instance occurred of the respect in which it was held, for although Richard was then all powerful, he could not prevail even on the creatures immediately under his own eye, to violate the sacred refuge, and force the un-



happy queen and her children from the altar. It was only by stratagem and persuasion that they were ultimately brought from thence.

In August, 1378, the right of Sanctuary possessed by the Abbey of Westminster, was for the first time violated; and the church itself became the scene of two most atrocious murders, which were committed under the following circumstances, as related by Mr. Britton, in his History of Westminster Palace. At the famous battle of Najara, in Spain, fought between Edward the Black Prince, and Don Henry, on the 3rd April, 1367, the Count of Denia, a Castilian nobleman, was made prisoner by Frank de Haule, or Haulay, and John Shackle, esquires, to Sir John Chandos, who conveyed him to England as their lawful captive. Frank de Haule, when dying, bequeathed his share of the prize to his son Robert, who, conjointly with Shackle, permitted the count to return to Castile to procure means to defray his ransom. He died, however, before this could be effected, and his son and heir "who remained in Gage for the monie," was for several years, still kept in durance by the two esquires. At length, early in the reign of Richard II., the Duke of Lancaster, who in right of Constantia, his wife, had laid claim to the crown of Castile, demanded the young count from his keepers; and on their refusing compliance he caused them to be committed to the Tower. Soon afterwards, escaping from prison, they took Sanctuary in the Abbey Church at Westminster; but it having been determined to seize them by force, Sir Ralph de Ferrers, one of the council, and Sir Alan Boxhull, constable of the Tower, with a retinue of fifty persons in armour, entered the church for that purpose, just at the time of the celebration of high mass. Shackle was prevailed on to submit without resistance; but Robert de Haule "would not suffer them to come within his reach, and perceiving they meant to take him by force, he drew out a falcheon, or short sword, which he had girt to him, and therewith layde so freely about him, traversing twice round about the monke's quire, that til they had beset him on each side, they could doe him no hurt, but at length

when they had got him at that advantage, one of them clove hys head to the very braynes, and an other thrust him through the body behinde with a sworde, and so they murthered him amongst them. They slew also one of the monkes that would have hadde them to have saved the esquires life."

This sacrilegious violation of a consecrated Sanctuary occasioned a great outcry amongst all ranks of the people ; and the Abbey church, as profaned by the shedding of blood, was shut up for about four months. Sentence of excommunication was also pronounced by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and five of his suffragan bishops, against all who had been concerned in the murder, either as principals or abettors, except the Duke of Lancaster, whose near relationship to the king, and possibly some apprehension of his vengeance, was the cause of his being especially exempted by name. His influence, indeed, was sufficiently powerful to secure the murderers from suffering in person, as they highly deserved ; but Sir Ralph de Ferrers and Sir Alan Boxhull, the two principals, covenanted to give 200*l.* to the Abbot of Westminster, by way of penance. Sometime afterwards, Shakle was set at liberty, he having compounded with the king to receive 500 marks in ready money, and lands of the annual value of 100 marks, for the ransom of his captive. It then became known that the young count, who had been hitherto in concealment, "was the verie groom that had served Shakle, all the tyme of hys trouble, and would never utter himself what he was before that time, having served hym as a hired servant all that while in prison, and out of prison, and in danger of life when his other master was murthered." This anecdote affords a curious illustration of the chivalrous feelings that often actuated both captors and captives in their conduct towards each other.

It appears that the inhabitants of the metropolis were so much excited by this sacrilegious violation of a building which had always previously been held in the greatest veneration, that it was thought advisable the parliament should not meet as usual at Westminster ; and it accordingly as-

sembled subsequently in St. Peter's Abbey, in the City of Gloucester. During the session a strong petition was presented from the abbot and convent of Westminster, complaining of the recent violation of their Sanctuary; and in the ensuing parliament, which met at Westminster, on the 25th April, 1379, it was ordained that "the privileges and immunities of the Abbey of Westminster should remain whole and inviolate;" but with the proviso that the lands and goods of such persons as took Sanctuary to defraud their creditors, should be liable to seizure in discharge of their debts.

This last proviso was rendered necessary in consequence of the custom that then prevailed, by which debtors were allowed to avail themselves of the privilege of Sanctuary to escape the law and defraud their creditors. These privileged places became also in course of time a refuge for some of the most depraved persons in society. Sir Walter Scott, in his historical novel of "The Fortunes of Nigel," has given an interesting description of a Sanctuary in London, called Whitefriars, close to Temple Bar. In the reign of William and Mary this place had become so intolerable a nuisance that an act of parliament was passed for the purpose of abolishing it. The act stated, that ever since the reformation certain places in and about London, which had been Sanctuaries during the prevalence of the Popish religion, afforded asylum to debtors, and were become receptacles of desperate persons who presumed to set the law at defiance. One of these places, Whitefriars, was filled by a crew of ruffians, who every day committed acts of violence and outrage. The law passed was however so rigorously put in execution, that they were obliged to abandon the district, which was soon filled with more creditable inhabitants.

Even so late as the year 1720, the privilege of Sanctuary was attempted to be taken advantage of, and Hume states that an act of parliament was obliged to be passed for the more effectual execution of justice in a part of Southwark, called the Mint, where a great number of persons had taken Sanctuary under the supposition that it was a privileged place.



## CHAPTER VI.

## THE INTERIOR OF THE ABBEY.

General remarks on the Monuments.—Poet's Corner.—Chapels of St. Benedict, St. Edmund, and St. Nicholas.—Curiosities and Monuments contained in them.

IN order that visitors to the Abbey may without difficulty ascertain the situation of the relics, &c. that are about to be described, we shall follow the usual course taken by those who exhibit them, and, entering at the door in Poet's Corner, thus proceed round the edifice. In this course we shall have to notice the several chapels which now form part of the Abbey, and the antiquities they contain. They are situated on the north side, and although dedicated to different saints, they all of them bore the general name of "Ladye Chapel," in honour of the Virgin Mary. They appear unnecessary additions to the Abbey, but they were not without their use. "If any one found himself too late for the service of the day, they were open to him, and he might there join in the general devotions without disturbing the congregation who were at prayers. There also the sick might take their part in the service without fatigue : and the stranger who arrived from afar, and wished not to appear before his brethren in the worn and dusty garment of the traveller." The number of these chapels belonging to the Abbey are nine, and are distinguished by the following titles : 1, St. Benedict's ; 2, St. Edmund's ; 3, St. Nicholas' ; 4, Henry the Seventh's, originally the Blessed Virgin's ; 5, St. Paul's ; 6, St. Edward the Confessor's ; 7, Erasmus' ; 8, Abbot Islip's ; 9, St. John's, St. Andrew's, and St. Michael's. The latter three are now formed into one.

A description of the curiosities of these chapels, with those in the area and transepts, will introduce to notice all that is worthy of being particularized within the Abbey.

In viewing the monuments the visitor cannot fail to be

struck at the great difference presented by those of the present day to those of the earlier ages. In nearly all the ancient tombs, without exception, the figures are rigid and ungraceful, generally laying on their backs, and too frequently presenting features without the least expression of intelligence to indicate the character of the individual, or the ability of the artist. There are however exceptions, but whenever the sculptor of those days attempted to depart from the general custom, he appears to have miserably failed. We have examples of this fact particularly in the chapel of St. Edmund. Knights in armour, and ladies, in certainly not graceful dresses, of general uniformity, form nearly the whole of the earlier statues. Even children of the tenderest years are ludicrously represented in the same suits as their grandfathers and grandmothers. The monuments of a later period give evidence of the improved taste and ability of the sculptors, attention is paid to minutia, the drapery is graceful, and the countenances often expressive. The coarse rough stone is replaced by marble, and hence the sculpture has been more enduring. After this period the fashion appears to have prevailed of gilding the tombs and interlaying coloured glass, to give additional effect. Many of the tombs still exhibit the care that has been bestowed on them in this way; but they have little of the beauty that distinguishes the works of our own time: Roubilliac, Rysbrach, Scheemakers, Banks, Bacon, Nollekens, Flaxman, Westmacott, and Chantry, have effected a revolution in this department of art, as surprising as any perhaps that can be mentioned. The statues erected by these great artists, which the world will not willingly suffer to decay, exhibit the most refined taste and genius; and approach as nearly to the unrivalled works of the Greek sculptors as possible. The visitor will find in the Abbey as fine a collection in this department of art as he can desire; and although in consequence of a wish to see all that is to be seen, and not to lose the descriptions of the attendant, visitors generally hurry from one monument to another without minutely examining any, those of the last century should not be so treated; their beauties can

only be seen perfectly by a critical inspection, and half-a-dozen well examined will give the mind more pleasure than looking heedlessly at a hundred. The admirer of the art of sculpture, as a late writer has well observed, has here as ample a field as the moralist in which to enjoy his peculiar taste. Upwards of four hundred monuments to characters more or less illustrious, besides a vast number of tablets and tombs, fill the place which is still accumulating its treasures. But the privilege of being numbered among the illustrious dead in such a place as this, should not surely be dependent on the ability to pay the fees. The Chapter demanded and received 700*l.* for fees out of the 6000*l.* which parliament voted to Bacon to erect a statue to Earl Chatham. What a mockery it is that the monument of Newton should be associated with that of the "carver in ordinary" of Charles II.; that a murdered rake, whose merit was his money, and his fate the singularity of his being shot in his own chariot on a Sunday in Pall Mall, should claim the attention and divide the interest with Percival, slain in the lobby of the House of Commons; that a child of a gentleman of the Royal Bedchamber should fill a space which might have been occupied by one grown grey in the service of the human race. Westminster Abbey should be a privileged place—the sanctuary of valour—of genius—of rank illustrious in the service of its country—of beauty and virtue conspicuous in their influence on society." Although doubtless such a desire might with advantage be acted upon in the present day, it must be borne in mind that at the time when the obnoxious monuments were placed in the Abbey, it was differently situated to what it is at the present time. It is to be regretted, however, that so many illustrious names in science, in literature, and in the arts, who have tended so materially to civilize and increase the happiness of the people of this country, should have no record in this great collection of England's most celebrated names.

Entering the Abbey at the South East corner, we shall now describe the monuments in—



## POET'S CORNER.

The tombs about this spot are probably better known than the others, in consequence of the public having admission to it during divine service. They are not so splendid in appearance as many that catch the eye; but they have associations connected with them, associations of the most pleasing kind, that render them even more attractive than the finer productions of the sculptor's chisel. The bust of MILTON by Rysbrach is a finished specimen of art; the calm dignity of feature and the inspired look that marks the countenance, brings vividly before us the author of "Paradise Lost." To the left of Milton is a head of BUTLER, that deserves attention; it is precisely the face which one might imagine should be that of the author of "Hudibras." The monument to the memory of BEN JONSON is principally remarkable for its epitaph, "O rare Ben Jonson;" which was engraved by the direction of Sir William Davenant, who has on his tomb in the ground a little distance off, a similar epitaph on himself. CHAUCER's tomb, though very elegant when first erected, is now so much decayed that it seldom attracts the notice of visitors; but it is worthy of attention if only on account of its being so far superior to many of the same date of erection.

The marble slab erected to the memory of SPENCER contains the following epitaph:—"Here lies (expecting the second coming of our Saviour, Christ Jesus,) the body of Edmund Spencer, the prince of poets in his time; whose divine spirit needs no other witness than the works which he left behind him. He was born in London in 1553, and died in 1598." SHAKESPEARE's monument is the least likely to escape attention; it was sculptured by Sheemakers, and is acknowledged to be a finished performance. On the pedestal are the heads of Henry V., Richard III., and Queen Elizabeth, fit ornaments for the tomb of our great dramatist, whose figure is delicately sculptured above. Nearly opposite to this is a full-length statue of the celebrated ADDISON, standing on a circular basement, on which are figures of the Muses; their attitudes are graceful, and

the monument suitable for one who gave to posterity the best example of pure language, and the best rules for living well, which remain and ever will remain, sacred. The beautiful monument to JOHN GAY contains for his epitaph the following lines written by himself:—

“Life is a jest, and all things show it;  
I thought so once, but now I know it.”

It is questionable whether they are calculated to awaken in the mind the sentiments with which it is desirable we should regard the tombs of genius. The monument to HANDEL is worthy of being, as it was, the last performance of the eminent Roubiliac; the likeness is known to be correct; and the arrangement of musical instruments, and his great work “The Messiah,” open at the part “I know that my Redeemer liveth,” are very appropriate. DR. STEPHEN HALES has a tomb with two very beautiful figures in relief, representing religion and botany; the latter holds a medallion of this great explorer of nature to public view, and religion is deploring the loss of the divine. The monument to the memory of DAVID GARRICK, the tragedian, is one of the most striking in the Abbey; he is throwing aside a curtain which discovers a medallion of Shakspeare, and is intended to show the power he possessed of bringing forth the great bard’s latent beauties: on either side are tragedy and comedy. The manner in which the sculptor has marked the difference between them is highly creditable to his ability; the figure of comedy laughing and unmasked, is a fine piece of sculpture.

In viewing the many beautiful monuments around, we may forget to cast our eyes upon the pavement. We should not do so, however, were it only to notice the slab that covers the remains of old THOMAS PARR; he lived in the reigns of ten sovereigns, from Edward IV. to Charles I., and attained the extraordinary age of 152 years. Under the pavement near Dryden’s tomb, is also buried (without tomb or inscription) the celebrated FRANCIS BEAUMONT, the dramatic poet; and ROBERT HAULE, by whose murder the privilege of Sanctuary was violated, as previously de-

scribed, lies near the same spot. The other tombs of the poets present nothing particular that requires notice ; their biographies are given in another part of this work.

Passing through the gate by the side of Dryden's monument, the visitor now enters the CHAPEL OF ST. BENEDICT.

It contains nothing that requires a particular description, being occupied by a few old tombs to the memory of persons whose lives were not distinguished by any important event that calls for commemoration.

#### THE CHAPEL OF ST. EDMUND.

A wooden screen divides this chapel from the aisle, and the ascent to it is by a single step. On the right side of the door stands the monument of WILLIAM DE VALENCE, Earl of Pembroke ; it is a curious specimen of the tombs erected in the fourteenth century, but at present is in a most delapidated condition. Indeed, most of the statues and tombs in this chapel appear to have been exceedingly ill-used. There is an alabaster monument of John of Eltham, EARL OF CORNWALL, which must at one time have been as fine as any in the Abbey ; but it is now also broken and disfigured. A writer, speaking of a large wood-cut which must have been affixed to the wall many years ago, being nearly obliterated by time, suggests the probability of its having been one of the requests for prayers for the soul of some person deceased, which had been placed there during the reign of Mary, when the Abbey was restored to its original condition. The only tomb deserving a particular notice in this chapel is one to the memory of LADY ELIZABETH RUSSEL ; who is represented asleep in a chair, and underneath are placed the words, "She is not dead, but sleeps." The exhibitor of the Abbey states that she died of a prick of a needle, which produced lockjaw ; but there is reason to conclude that this statement is one of the marvellous relations with which the exhibitors amuse the visitor, and most probably originated in consequence of the Latin epitaph beneath.



Between the chapels of St. Edmund and St. Benedict is a monument to the memory of the CHILDREN OF HENRY III. It has evidently been a very superb monument; but is now only deserving notice as it shows "to what strange uses may we not return," being converted into a writing-desk for the attendant!

#### THE CHAPEL OF ST. NICHOLAS.

The tombs in this chapel are nearly all in the Elizabethian style, of which they afford the visitor some curious specimens. Canopies, effigies, kneeling figures, and pyramids, are curiously intermixed; and each tomb has formerly been enriched and beautified, according to the taste of the age, with gilding and touchstone, alabaster and porphyry. The persons to whom the monuments are erected are no less strangely associated; amongst the rest is a large pyramid erected to the memory of a child *two months old*, who was overlaid by his nurse. Amongst the curious epitaphs may be enumerated that of LADY CECIL'S; it is a dialogue between her husband and herself expressing the affection they formerly experienced for each other. There is a gothic monument to the memory of WILLIAM DE DUDLEY, Bishop of Durham, that deserves notice, being a good specimen of monuments in that style.



### CHAPTER VII.

#### HENRY THE SEVENTH'S CHAPEL.

Interior of the Chapel.—The Pavement.—The Stalls.—Curious Carvings on the Seats.—The Windows.—Statues in the Chapel.—The Roof.—Henry the Seventh's Tomb.—Monuments in the Aisles.

THE chapels hitherto described contain little to interest the visitor; but the one now about to be noticed, is rich in all that can gratify the curiosity of the inquirer, or the cultivated taste of the artist.

The entrance is by a flight of twelve steps of black mar-

ble, under a porch of fine workmanship, which is divided into three arches. In consequence of the darkness of this entrance, it is unfortunate that the ornaments with which it is adorned cannot be seen to advantage; but the fine sculpture of the roof is well deserving attention. This porch is said to be one of the most beautiful, in the pointed style of architecture, at present existing. The entrance gates to the chapel at the top of the steps at first appear to be composed of solid metal; they are, however, formed of oak, cased with brass. The centre gates are eleven feet three inches in height, and eight feet three inches in width; and contain sixty perfect squares perforated, and five imperfect ones. The side gates are nearly eleven feet in height, and five in width; they contain twenty-eight squares, and are all ornamented with the initials of Henry the Seventh's name, bunches of roses entwined with a crown (in allusion to the union of the houses of York and Lancaster by his marriage) fleus-de-lis—the portcullis with a coronet, &c.; the devices are of brass, and finely cast. The visitor now enters the nave of the chapel, and passing from the gloom of the entrance the sight that presents itself is greatly enhanced; at the first entry it is difficult to fix the attention on any particular object. The ceiling, “the fretted vault,” the fine windows, the exquisitely carved stalls, and the beauty of the great tomb of Henry VII. at the end, all impress themselves upon the mind so vividly, that it is some time before we can direct our attention to one spot alone, in order to examine in detail what has so much gratified us as a whole. If we do, however, we shall find that every portion is characterized by the most finished workmanship; and that the beauty of the entire building is derived from the perfection of its parts. To enable the reader to appreciate the work as it deserves, we shall commence with a description of the pavement, and from thence proceed to the roof.

The pavement was laid down at the expense of Dr. Killigrew, formerly a prebendary of this Abbey. As a memorial of his munificence a brass plate recording the fact, is inlaid in the pavement at the upper end of the chapel;

this pavement is of black and white marble, lozenge shape. In the centre is a plate of brass, generally covered with the seats, which is the only memorial that distinguishes the tomb of George II. and his Queen. The length of the chapel, measured along the floor, is one hundred and fifteen feet, the breadth eighty feet, and the height eighty-six feet.

On each side of the nave, on a flooring raised a little above the level of the pavement, is a row of oaken stalls ; before which are reading-desks, and below them rows of seats. These stalls and desks are appropriated to the Knights of the Bath and their esquires. The stalls prevent the beauty of the arches of the aisles being seen ; but they are finely carved, and each is different from the others. On the tops of the pinnacles are placed the helmets, crests, and swords, of the Knights of the Bath ; and the banners of the knights who belonged to the order in 1812, when a grand installation took place, are hung from projecting supporters. Underneath the stalls are the seats of the esquires, having their arms, names, and titles, engraved on brass plates fastened to the backs. These seats are made so that they can turn back and form small stools, which are called “ miserere :” and it is said were intended formerly for the benefit of the monks, who could thus rest with their elbows on the upper part of the stalls during portions of their painful religious offices. They are so formed, however, that if the monk happened to fall asleep, the seat would fall forward and throw the unfortunate monk on the floor of the nave ; these seats are likewise ornamented with some exceedingly rare carving. When the seats are down nothing is to be seen ; but upon turning them up we find those improper representations which are an evidence of the diseased taste of the times when they were carved. Many of them possess an irresistible whimsicality of thought, most ludicrously expressed ; such as asses gathering nuts ; another drinking ; a bear playing on the bagpipes ; two figures with their hands tied across their knees ; a woman flagellating a man as she would a little child ; another beating a man with a distaff ; a man distorting his mouth with his fingers ; a giant picking the garrison of a



castle out over the walls ; an ape overturning a basket of wheat ; a fox in armour riding a goose ; a cock in armour riding a fox ; a devil carrying off a miser ; the judgment of Solomon ; and several which are too rude and even indelicate to be described. Some of them, however, are representations of fruit and flowers ; and these are particularly deserving of attention, from the perfect resemblance they bear to their originals. Altogether, perhaps, there is not so fine a collection of specimens of carving in wood in the kingdom as these, which ornament the seats of the esquires under the knights' stalls. The carving of the stalls is extremely good. It will be perceived that one or two of the places where the banners hang above, are vacant ; they have been removed in consequence of the knights to whom they belonged having disgraced themselves. Lord Cochrane's was torn down in consequence of his having been concerned in some gambling transaction on the Stock Exchange. Sir E. Coutts was disgraced in a similar manner, in consequence of his having been found guilty of a misdemeanour.

The windows of the chapel were originally filled with splendid designs in painted glass ; one has the red and white roses, and a crown upon a tree, alluding to the finding of Richard the Third's crown at a place called Stoke, after the battle of Bosworth Field. Some of the windows still contain portions, such as crosses, crowns, single feathers of the Prince of Wales' crest ; red and white roses ; the king's initials, and fragments of canopies which were once above various saints. One of the figures in the window opposite the entrance is still perfect, as well as several armorial bearings of the kings of England. There is a curious history connected with a window originally intended for this chapel that deserves to be noticed, the story is as follows :—It was made by the order of the magistrates of Dort, in Holland, and intended as a present to Henry VII. ; but that monarch dying before it was finished, it was set up in Waltham Abbey, in Essex, where it remained till the dissolution of that monastery ; when it was removed to New Hall in the same county, then in the

possession of General Monk, and it was preserved by him during the civil wars. Some years ago, John Olmius, esq., the then possessor of New Hall, sold it to Mr. Conyers, of Copt Hall, who resold it to the inhabitants of St. Margaret's Parish, Westminster, in 1758, for four hundred guineas; and it now adorns St. Margaret's Church, close to the Abbey. The subject illustrated by this painted window is our Saviour's crucifixion; but there are many figures on it that bear no relation to this event. At the bottom of the two side pannels are represented Henry VII. and his Queen; the drawing was taken from the original picture sent to Dort for that purpose. Over the king is the figure of St. George, and above that a red and white rose; over the figure of the queen stands that of St. Catherine of Alexandria; and in the pannel over her head appears a pomegranate, the arms of the kingdom of Grenada.

Around the chapel are a number of statues, in all seventy-three, so varied in their attitude, features, and drapery, that it is impossible to say any two are alike; the disposition of their limbs is shown through the clothing, and the folds of their robes fall in those bold marked lines which are the characteristic of superior sculpture. They are thus described by an eminent antiquary, Nightingale:—the first five to the North-west are cardinals and divines; the next, a figure with St. Peter's keys on his hat; the second, holding a mitre; the third, a prelate, whose hand is licked by an imperfect animal; the fourth, a fine studious old man, St. Anthony, reading—a pig is placed at his feet. The next is a prelate blessing a female figure kneeling before him; after this a bishop reading with a spindle in one hand—a king and a bishop wresting the dart from Death, who lies prostrate under his feet; under the fourth window is a priest uncovering the oil for extreme unction; St. Lawrence with the gridiron, reading; a venerable old man with flowing hair, bearing something (decayed) upon a cushion; a priest; and the fifth a female, probably a priestess. On the South side, commencing at the great arch which separates the nave from the chancel, a king

reading ; an old man reading ; one playing on a flute ; St. Sebastian bound naked to a tree ; and a figure with a bow. Further on, a bishop, with his crosier in his left hand, with his right he holds a crowned head placed on the corner of his robe ; a queen ; a bishop with a crosier and wallet ; a king with a sceptre, and a head in his left hand ; St. Denys ; the fifth a bishop. Under the third window are statues similar to the preceding, and also belonging to the great arch ; as they are much like the previous ones an enumeration of them might be tedious. The east end of both the aisles have had altars, and over them the same kind of beautiful niches, statues, and ornaments, that adorn the recesses of the nave. Amongst these statues we must not fail to notice one in the small chapel on one side of Henry the Seventh's monument, and just above the tomb of the Duke of Montpensier. It is a representation of St. Roch, who is said to have been unremitting in his exertions during the plague, and for curing which he was famous ; the legend states that when he was taken ill, a dog brought him bread under a tree, and the animal is sculptured above. The walls, as well as the nave, contain upwards of a hundred and twenty statues, similar to those described.

The next object that claims attention is the roof of this beautiful chapel. To give an accurate description of it is almost impossible, it must be seen to be appreciated. The best spot for viewing it, is at the extreme east end, and from this spot its appearance is grand beyond description. None but those who are conversant with the difficulties of architecture can form a just idea of the skill and labour necessary to perfect such a roof as this. It is perhaps unequalled by any in the world. Mr. Brayley says that although on a slight examination it may appear that its ornamental character has diverged into overcharged exuberancy, yet, when the mind has had leisure to separate the masses, and to reflect on the consummate science displayed in the details and arrangement, the judgment recoils from its own inference, and willingly submits to be controlled by the more powerful emotions of unmixed admiration. In the design and construction of the main



vaulting of the chapel profound geometrical knowledge is combined with the utmost practical science ; and the result has been truly termed a prodigy of art. It is not alone the untutored mind that contemplates with astonishment the vastness of its extent, and the fearful altitude of its pendent decorations ; but even the intelligent architect wonders at the ingenuity and daring hardihood that could arrange, and securely poise in air, such ponderous masses of stone, and counteract the power of gravity by professional skill. The form of this chapel, is similar to that of the distinct building, it consists of a nave and chancel with two side aisles. The chancel is divided from the nave by a bold arch, five feet in depth crossing from north to south ; which adds greatly to the strength of the building, it is decorated throughout so elaborately that it will afford the greatest pleasure to the admirers of architectural beauty. The lightness of the shafts that spring upwards, to support the roof ; the singular diversity of appropriate and beautiful ornaments that adorn the arch, give a character to the work that cannot be excelled. It is astonishing that the builder of such an exquisite production of art, should have been forgotten ; yet such is the fact. The first stone of the building, as previously mentioned, was laid by Abbot Islip on 11th. Feb. 1503 ; but it is only *supposed*, that it was erected by the prior of St. Bartholomew's, William Bolton. Thus it is, the works of genius survive even the memory of their authors.

We are indebted for the wonderful specimen of architectural beauty and grandeur, we have been describing, to the desire of Henry VII. to be buried in a tomb that should carry down his name to posterity. His monument contained in his chapel, was prepared in compliance with this desire, and is not unworthy of the building in which it is contained. Its sculptor was Pietro Torregiano, a Florentine, and an associate with Michael Angelo ; in a quarrel between them relative to their superiority, Angelo received a blow from Torregiano on the face, that broke the bridge of his nose. Henry's Tomb will be a lasting memorial of the skill of its designer, whatever may have been his genius

compared with the great master with whom he quarrelled. It is melancholy to reflect on the fate that befel him in consequence of his ability. He was employed to sculpture a figure of the Virgin Mary for a wealthy Spaniard, but after completing it, his employer refused to pay the price he had fixed for his labour, and offered him so mean a sum, that in a fit of passion he broke the image. For this act he was thrown into the inquisition as having been guilty of impiety; and having, through the influence of the nobleman, been sentenced to be burnt alive, he escaped that horrible death by refusing to take food, and died of starvation. He finished Henry the Seventh's tomb in 1518, for which he received the sum of fifteen hundred pounds; an immense sum, when the difference in the value of money is considered. The tomb is surrounded by a screen, or brazen inclosure, which, with a very trifling alteration, would form an outside plan for a magnificent palace in the Gothic style; the double range of windows terminating by a projecting arched cornice, the frieze of Quatrefoil, and the battlements are all suited to such a building, and the portal would be an exquisite window for the hall, a little shortened. It harmonizes exceedingly well with the architecture of the chapel, and there is little doubt but that the moulds were made by the same artists as prepared the models for working the masonry. The screen is of brass, but the tomb itself is formed of black marble, the figures bas reliefs, shields and pilasters are of copper gilt. During the civil wars much injury was done to this tomb, with many others: several of the small statues on the screen have been destroyed. Those remaining, are St. George, St. James, St. Bartholomew, and St. Edward. On the top of the tomb are placed the statues of Henry VII. and his Queen Elizabeth; they are laying side by side, and are well designed. The countenances are expressive, and the drapery graceful. There are six compartments containing figures in bas relief at the sides, that the visitor should not neglect to notice. The first compartment in the north side (the left-hand side from the entrance of the chapel) represents St. Edward the Confessor, and a monk of the Bene-



dictine order. In the second compartment, St. Christopher is represented with the infant Saviour on his shoulder, and a female figure is standing by his side. The third division has the figure of Mary Magdalen holding in her hands the box of precious ointment, and standing by her is St. Barbara, of whom the following legend is recorded. Her father, who was a Pagan about the time when Christianity first began to increase the number of its converts, had determined to build two baths for his accommodation. Being obliged to leave home, he desired St. Barbara to see that the work was completed during his absence according to his desire, but on returning he was surprised to find that three baths had been erected. On inquiring why this had been done, he was told that his daughter had embraced the Christian faith, and ordered the third bath to be built in honour of the Holy Trinity. Her father having in vain attempted to make her abjure her faith, was stimulated to persecute, and excite others to persecute, the Christians. Many, in consequence, suffered martyrdom, and amongst the rest St. Barbara, who was canonized in consequence. On the other side of the tomb, passing round it, the first compartment contains a figure of St. George and St. Anthony, who is known by his symbol, a pig's head. The next division has the figures of St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist; the former has a book in his hand on which is inscribed the words "Agnus Dei." The last compartment contains figures of the Virgin Mary, with our Saviour in her arms, and the Archangel St. Michael. The latter is holding a pair of scales that have been broken, but the devil, who is represented beneath, reaching with one of his claws to pull down one of the scales, would seem to imply that the archangel was about to determine the balance of good and evil, and which Satan was endeavouring to prevent.

From this description some idea may be formed of the magnificence of the tomb, but it can only be properly appreciated by an inspection of it; and if attentively considered, and its beauties understood (which it is hoped the foregoing particulars will assist in causing to be the case), the time occupied in viewing it will not be regretted.



Henry the Seventh's chapel, although intended especially for himself and his successors, contains the tombs of many individuals in no way connected with the Royal Family. At the top of the Chantry, however, lie the remains of EDWARD VI., which formerly were honoured with an elegantly-finished monument. According to Camden, during the Commonwealth, however, it was broken in pieces, because it contained a representation of the resurrection of our Saviour.

On the south side of Henry the Seventh's tomb is a small chapel, which forms the top of the south aisle, but in consequence of the knight's stalls preventing the aisles being seen from the body of the chapel, it appears separated. This little chapel, like the one on the north side, formerly had a grand altar-piece, the marks of which are still visible. Over it are arched pannels, and a row of angels with the king's badges; above them, three superb niches, whose ornaments and canopies are extremely rich. On the top of the middle one is a seated lion, and on the right the greyhound; to the left a dragon. The centre niche is empty, but the right contains a statue, about four feet high, of a venerable man, who reads from a book rested on the broken hilt of a sword. A mitred figure on the left was probably intended for St. Dionysius, for he supports with much veneration a mitred head, which has been cut off. They are both noble figures, with excellent drapery, and faces full of expression; the figure reading is almost as fresh as when new. This chapel contains the tomb of the DUKE OF RICHMOND and his lady. Their effigies are lying on the top of a marble table, under a canopy of brass, which is supported at the corners by figures of the four cardinal virtues, Prudence, Charity, Faith, and Hope. They are finely executed, but the appearance of the tomb is somewhat lessened, in consequence of the artist having pierced the canopy into a number of fantastic thin scrolls, in order to prevent its seeming too heavy. On the top is the figure of Fame sounding the trumpet; but if attentively considered, it will be seen that the position is unnatural, and one which could never be supported. The centre of

gravity is without the base of the figure, so that if it was not fixed by one foot, it would certainly fall. The contrast between this Fame and the well-known graceful figure of Mercury, will show how much beauty depends simply on placing a statue, independent of the workmanship.

In the chapel opposite, on the north side, is a monument likewise filling the entire space, to the memory of George Villiers, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM, who was stabbed by Felton, in the reign of Charles the First. The emblematical figures around are cast in brass and gilt; although erected in accordance with that bad taste which considered weeping Romans and suits of armour necessary parts of a great man's monument, they are not badly designed, and the figure of Neptune will bear a critical notice. In this chapel, the same as in that on the opposite side, there is an altar and figures above. A fine figure holds a book, and a tame lion is at his feet; on each side is a priest. Where the altar stood is a black tablet.

In passing out of Henry the Seventh's chapel, we shall perceive on each side a small door-way that leads into either aisle. That on the north side (the right hand on leaving the chapel) contains the monument of QUEEN ELIZABETH, which was erected by James I. The features appear to be correctly represented, and present that prim appearance which is observable in the best portraits of her that at present exist. "Bloody Queen Mary" is likewise interred here. At the upper end of this aisle is a monument that deserves to be noticed as a curiosity, being a child in a cradle; it was erected in memory of a daughter of James I., who died when three days old. Against the wall at the end is an altar, erected by Charles II. to the memory of EDWARD V. and his brother, who were murdered by the direction of Richard III. in the Tower of London. The tomb is not remarkable for any particular beauty, but is worthy of notice as containing the bones of the unfortunate princes.

From this aisle we pass to the one on the opposite side of the entrance porch, where the first tomb that presents itself to notice, is one that must be highly gratifying to the

lovers of hereditary honours, being that of LADY MARGARET DOUGLAS, daughter of Margaret, Queen of Scots, and mother of the celebrated Earl Darnley, father of King James I. by the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots. The inscription round the tomb contains a long list of the royal relations of the lady who is interred below. She appears to have had no less than seven kings for her cousins, uncles, &c., and six queens having similar degrees of relationship. This monument is a good example of the grotesque style in fashion at the time it was erected. Infants, dressed in armour, are around the tomb, and the little ladies in their prim bodices look like grandmothers in miniature. The next tomb is to the memory of MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS, the rival and victim of Elizabeth. It is in the customary style of the period, and the face and head-dress will be familiar to the visitor. Here is also a table monument, on which is a figure of the COUNTESS OF RICHMOND, mother of Henry VII. Through her benevolence forty poor women are supplied every Saturday afternoon, in the south cross of the Abbey, with a pound and a half of beef, and a fourpenny loaf of bread, besides receiving twopence each in money. The effigy of the lady is of brass gilt, and is one of the finest figures in the Abbey. The features, hands, and drapery, are excellent, and well worth the study of the artist: had it been placed erect, instead of lying on its back, it might have been pronounced unequalled. On the side is a graceful figure of LADY WALPOLE, the wife of Sir Robert Walpole. It is said to have been brought from Italy; and were it not that the folds of the drapery are too numerous, would be equal to some of the finest statues in the Abbey. At the end of the aisle is a glass case containing a horrible wax figure of King Charles II., dressed in the robes he wore at Windsor at the installation of the Knights of the Garter. Underneath this case is the entrance to the royal vault, in which lie the remains of Charles II., William III., and his Queen Mary, and Queen Anne and her husband. This completes the description of the tombs in the chapel of Henry the Seventh.



## CHAPTER VIII.

Chapel of St. Paul—Watt's Monument—St. Edward the Confessor's Chapel—Pavement and Screen—Curious Paintings—The Chantry—Henry the Seventh's Tomb and Armour—Shrine of St. Edward—Other Tombs of Royal Persons—The Stained Windows.

AFTER leaving the chapel of Henry VII., the next one to which the visitor is conducted is that of St. Paul. It is peculiarly interesting, in consequence of containing the noble monument by Chantry to the memory of JAMES WATT. A biography of this extraordinary man will be found in another portion of this work, and it is only necessary, therefore, now to direct attention to the statue; it was executed by Chantry, and is a fine specimen of the sculptor's art. It is so large, that in order to place it in this chapel, it was necessary to take up the pavement, and dig away the earth from the door-way, otherwise it could not have passed through. The epitaph by Lord Brougham is one of the finest specimens of this kind of literary composition that has ever been written in the English language; it is dignified and impressive, yet the words are simple and unaffected, and on most minds calculated to make a far greater impression than all the fulsome flattery that disgraces so many of the tombs around. On the right of Watt's monument is one to the memory of SIR JOHN PUCKERING, about which are placed his children. The sculptor, in order to inform the spectator which of them died before their father, and which after, has adopted the very ingenious method of making those who died previously, *hold their heads in their hands*. The epitaph is also deserving notice, as it shows, by contrast, the excellence of the one to the memory of Watt. There is little more to attract attention in this chapel, except a punning epitaph on SIR JAMES FULLERTON, which seems to belie one portion of it, "That he was a professed

renouncer of all vanity," if he had any share in the composition.

#### ST. EDWARD THE CONFESSOR'S CHAPEL.

Crossing the aisle from the last chapel, a little staircase conducts us to St. Edward's shrine, a spot for centuries regarded with more veneration than any other portion of the Abbey. It is now much delapidated, principally from the desire of devotees to possess some relic having induced them to carry away any portions of the stone, &c., they could break off. The pavement at one time must have been exceedingly curious and beautiful; it was laid down by the Abbot Ware, who also formed that before the altar, and consists of large dark-coloured stones cut into circles intersecting others, triangles upon triangles, and many other curious forms. The foolish practice, however, of stealing relics, has sadly disfigured this fine pavement.

The screen which ornaments this chapel, is considered to be one of the most interesting specimens of early art at present existing, and is supposed to have been erected in the fourteenth century. It consists of fourteen divisions of sculptured figures, which, although extremely rude in workmanship, are interesting on account of their antiquity, and as illustrating many events in the life of St. Edward. The first division contains the trial of Queen Emma; the second, the birth of Edward; the third, his coronation; the fourth, the manner in which he was prevented from continuing an opposite tax, called "dane gelt," by seeing the devil dance upon the bags of money he had collected by it; the fifth compartment shows how he reproved the thief who robbed his treasury. Of this event Mr. Brayley quotes the following account:—"Whilst Edward was one day laying musing on his bed, a youthful domestic entered the chamber, and thinking the monarch was asleep, he went up to a coffer (which Hugoline, the king's chamberlain, had negligently left open), and taking out a quantity of money, deposited it in his bosom, and quitted the apartment. Having placed the stolen treasure in security, he returned

a second time and did the like ; and not being yet contented with his booty, he came a third time, and was again kneeling at the chest, when the king, who knew his chamberlain to be at hand, but wished the thief to make his escape, exclaimed, ‘ You are too covetous, youth ; take what you have and fly ; for if Hugoline come, he will not leave you a single doit.’ The pilferer immediately fled, without being pursued. Shortly afterwards Hugoline came back, and perceiving how considerable a sum had been stolen through his negligence, he turned pale and trembled, sighing vehemently at the same time. The king hearing him, rose from his bed, and affecting to be ignorant of what had happened, inquired the cause of his perturbation, which Hugoline relating, ‘ Be at peace,’ replied Edward, ‘ perhaps he that has taken it has more need of it than ourselves. Let him have it ; what remains is sufficient for us.’ In the sculpture the king is reclining on his bed, and the thief is kneeling at the money chest. The remaining compartments contain the miraculous appearance of the Saviour to St. Edward. The story of the drowning of the Danish king, by which the invasion of England was prevented ; the quarrel between the boys Tosti and Harold, predicting their respective fates ; the Confessor’s vision of the Seven Sleepers ; his vision of St. John the Evangelist in the habit of a pilgrim ; the story of curing the eyes of the blind by washing in dirty water by the Evangelist ; that person delivering the ring to the king, which he had given to St. John as an alms when he met him, without knowing it, in the form of a pilgrim ; lastly, the haste made by the king to complete the foundation of the Abbey, in consequence of a message from the saint foretelling his death. All these figures are in bold relief, and the principal of them are about a foot high. The design of the lower part of the screen is extremely elegant.

Over the tomb of Richard II. is a wooden canopy, underneath which are the remains of what, according to Mr. Nightingale, have been some exquisitely fine paintings. The canopy is divided into four compartments ; those over the heads and feet of the effigies contain representations of



angels supporting the monarch's arms, and those of his queen, but they are nearly obliterated by age; the shields are all that remain visible. The second compartment, from the head of the effigies, has what was intended by the artist, for a representation of the Almighty, habited as a venerable old man in a close garment! His hand is in the act of blessing, but this is hardly discernible. In the next division is our Saviour, seated by the Virgin Mother. The Virgin is in a most graceful and expressive manner leaning towards the Saviour, with her hands across her breast. The countenance, when minutely examined, will be found still very beautiful, although much injured by time.

At the West end of this chapel, underneath the chantry, is the tomb of Henry V., over the arch of the gate which divided it from the chapel and the front of the chantry, is a profusion of exquisitely rich Gothic workmanship of the most delicate texture. On each side are statues, the size of life, representing saints in speaking attitudes.

From their situation in the front of the two octagonal towers, that contain staircases leading to the chantry, they are particularly striking. The tomb of Henry V. is remarkable from its having upon it, his effigy, without a head. It is said to have been originally formed of silver, and the attendant informs visitors, that during the civil war between Charles I and his parliament, it was taken from the monument and coined into money; antiquaries however have ascertained, that it was not stolen till the reign of Henry the Eighth. In this chapel is also contained, a portion of the armour of Henry the V which it is said, he wore at the battle of Agincourt. It consists of a plain rusty iron helmet, and shield, without any decorations, and a portion of his saddle. The helmet is placed on a wooden beam, that is fixed between the entrance towers, and the shield and saddle, are against the columns at the sides. There is another shield, and also a sword, preserved in this chapel; they belong to Edward the third, and were used by him when he invaded France. The sword is seven feet long, and was therefore probably a sword of state, and not intended as a weapon of offence.

The shrine, or tomb of Edward the Confessor, is in the centre of the chapel. It was erected by Henry III. on the canonization of the saint. He was the last of the Saxon race of kings in this country; and in consequence of having been entirely under the direction of the monks during his life-time, they extolled his name so highly after his death, for every virtue which in that rude age was considered to dignify our nature, that he was made a saint of by the Pope; who issued a bull to the Abbot of Westminster, directing that the body of Edward should be honoured on earth "as his soul is glorified in heaven." In consequence of these proceedings, his shrine was supposed to possess a peculiar degree of sanctity, and offerings of the richest kind were presented at the altar. So valuable were the jewels, &c. which decorated it that when Henry the Third was pressed for money, he obtained a few of the Abbot to pledge them to some foreigners, and realized an immense sum; their value was estimated at nearly 2600*l.* of the money of that period, equal to about 50,000*l.* at the present time. The shrine was believed to have peculiar virtues attached to it; most extraordinary cures of every kind of disease, were said to have been wrought by visiting it; and we need not therefore feel surprised at the liberality of the devotees.

Brayley says, that such great sanctity was attached to this shrine, that a part of the stone basement seat, on the east side of the south transept, has been worn into a deep hollow, by the feet of devout Catholics, who attended here early in the morning, and who from this point could just obtain a view of the upper division of the shrine. It is still also within the recollection of some aged members of the church, that previously to the French revolution, the very dust and sweepings of the shrine and chapel of St. Edward were preserved and *exported to Spain and Portugal in barrels*. But even in that trade, adulterations were practised, and much unholy dust, swept from other chapels was mingled with the rubbish of this shrine.

Thus the monks were able to make as much, or more use of the saint when dead, than even while he lived; and they had good reason for keeping up the belief of the superior sanctity of his tomb.



Around the shrine of the Confessor lie the remains of many of the sovereigns of this country, whose military achievements have given a lustre to their names that is hardly diminished even in the present day. Edward the First and his Queen, the celebrated Eleanor; Henry the Third; Henry the Fifth, and his consort; Edward the Third and Philippa; and Richard the Second and his Queen, have each of them a tomb within this chapel. When first erected, they were no doubt exceedingly elegant, but now they present little that is worthy of attention, except as the mementoes of bygone splendour. An immense sum was expended by Edward III. in erecting the monument to his wife Philippa, and round it were placed as ornaments brass effigies of all the kings, queens, and nobility, who were related to her by blood or marriage. Her figure is in alabaster, and is very large for a female. The statue of Henry III. is also deserving of notice. It is in a very perfect state, and is well executed. Queen Eleanor's tomb, has a peculiar degree of interest attached to it, from the amiable and affectionate character she is said to have borne. Her effigy is formed of Petworth marble, and is the work of a good artist. The face has a peculiar degree of sweetness imparted to it, that is not excelled by any monument in the Abbey. Although her body is buried here, her heart was interred in the choir of the friars' pendicant, in London. Similar circumstances frequently occurred, and it was for a long time supposed that the body of Edward the First, was not contained in his tomb. The society of antiquaries, however, having reason to believe that such was the case, obtained permission to open it, and in the month of May, 1770, the Dean of Westminster and several members of the society had the monument inspected in their presence. "On lifting up the head of the tomb, the royal body was found wrapped in a strong thick linen cloth, waxed on the inside; the head and face were covered with a "Sundarium," or a face cloth of crimson sarcenet wrapped into three folds, conformable to the napkin used by our Saviour on the way to his execution, as we are told by the church of Rome; on flinging open the external mantle



the corpse was discovered in all the ensigns of majesty richly habited. The body was wrapped in a fine Cere cloth, closely fitted to every part, even to the fingers and face. Over the Cere cloth was a tunic of red silk and a mask; above that a stole of thick white tissue crossed the breast; and on this, at six inches distance from each other, quarter foils of filligee work, of gilt metal, set with false stones, imitating rubies, sapphires, amethysts, &c., and the intervals between the quarterfoils on the stole, were powdered with minute white beads, tacked down in a most elegant embroidery, in form of what is called the true lovers knot. Above these habits was the royal mantle of rich crimson satin, fastened on the left shoulder with a magnificent "fibula" of gilt metal richly chased, and ornamented with four pieces of red, and four pieces of blue transparent paste, and twenty-four more pearls. The corpse from the waist downward, was covered with a rich cloth of figured gold, which reached down to the feet, and was tacked beneath them. On the back of each hand was a quarterfoil, like those on the stole. In the king's right hand was a sceptre, with a cross of copper gilt, and of elegant workmanship; reaching to the right shoulder. In the left hand were the rod and dove, which passed over the shoulder and reached his ear. The dove stood on a ball placed on three ranges of oak leaves of enamelled green; the dove white enamel. On the head was a crown charged with trefoils made of gilt metal. The head was lodged in a stone coffin, always observable in those receptacles of the dead. The corpse was habited in conformity to ancient usage, even as early as the time of the founder of the Abbey, the Saxon king Sebert." The practice of embalming the sovereign in Cere cloth is still continued, and it gives an additional point to the word of the poet.

"Why this ado in earthing up a carcase  
That's fall'n into disgrace, and in the nostril  
Smells horrible?"

Besides the objects of interest we have described, the painted windows are also well worthy of attention, both on

account of their great age, and from being specimens of the great degree of excellence to which the art had attained some centuries ago. It is commonly supposed that the art of staining glass is lost ; but this is erroneous. We possess the knowledge of producing nearly every colour in glass, that is to be found in the old windows of former ages, but in consequence of the art having little or no patronage, it has not received the degree of attention that it formerly did. During the middle ages, when men of wealth left their money at their decease for the purpose of building, or beautifying Abbeys, and Cathedrals, every possible encouragement was offered to the artist to render his work as perfect and beautiful as possible, and this will easily account for the great perfection to which it then attained ; but as soon as the religious enthusiasm that prompted such exertions had died away, the stimulus was lost ; there was little or no occasion for many of the artists who had once been so highly patronised, and hence the art declined. The windows in this chapel are described as being fine specimens of the perfection to which painting on glass had attained at the time they were made. The glass is reported as being not less than the eighth of an inch thick, while the figures which are formed out of an innumerable variety of small pieces, cut so as to compose with proper shades of colour the form and drapery of the persons represented. In the legend of Edward the Confessor and the pilgrim, the deep and brilliant colours of the glass, the beautiful arrangement of the drapery, and the noble expression given to the countenances of the figures, well deserve the admiration with which they must be viewed by a lover of the fine arts.

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## CHAPTER IX.

The Coronation Chair and Fatal Stone—Description and History of the Chair—Prophetic or Fatal Stone—Tradition respecting it—Brought from Scotland by Edward I.—Reverence paid to it by the People of Scotland.

AGAINST the screen in St. Edward's Chapel, that has just been described, are usually placed the Coronation Chairs. In appearance they are much alike, but here the resemblance ends. One of them containing a relic—the celebrated Scone stone, that gives it an extreme degree of interest in the eyes of the antiquary, the other being merely a chair that was made for Queen Mary, the consort of William III., at the time she was crowned. As the Coronation Chair containing the Scone stone is one of the most curious relics in the Abbey, we shall minutely describe it, as well as some of the important events with which it has been connected. Mr. Brayley has devoted the greatest share of time and attention on this stone, and we therefore refer to him principally for the following particulars respecting it.

The Coronation Chair is composed of oak, and is still firm and sound, though much disfigured by wanton mutilations and the effects of time. The mode of its construction so decidedly accords with the general character of the architecture of Edward the First's reign, that no hesitation could be felt by any one conversant with the subject, in ascribing it to that period, even were there no document extant to prove the conjecture correct. Whatever may have become of the original chair, in which Kenneth is reported to have had the stone enclosed, and which does not appear to have been ever brought into England, it is certain that the present chair was purposely made for the reception of this highly-prized relic of ancient customs and sovereign power. The fact is rendered evident by the



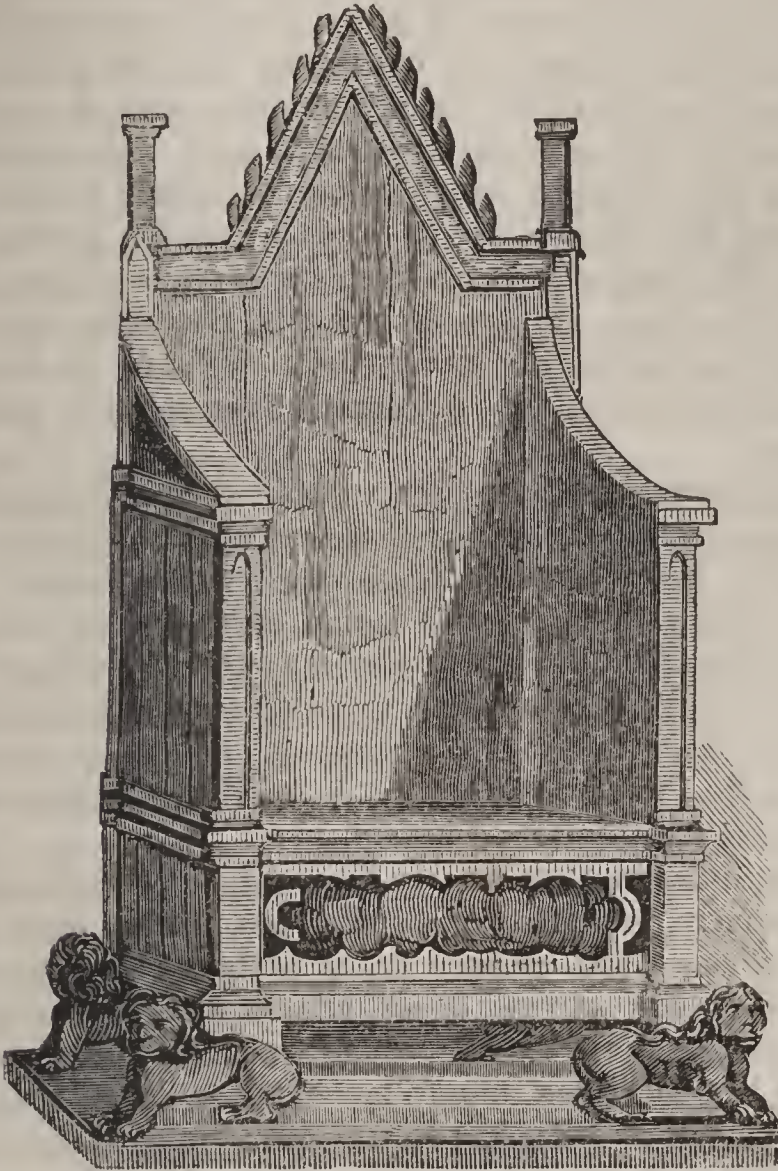
“wardrobe accounts” of Edward’s time, which have been published under the direction of the Society of Antiquaries. Among the entries of the year 1300, are the following particulars relating to a “step,” which had been recently made:—“To Master Walter, the painter, for the costs and expenses incurred by him, about making one step at the foot of the new Chair (in which is the stone from Scotland), set up near the altar, before St. Edward’s Shrine, in the Abbatial Church at Westminster, in pursuance of the order of the King in the month of March; and for the wages of the carpenter and painter for painting the said step; and for gold and divers colours brought for the painting of the same, together with the making of one case for covering the said Chair, as appears from the particulars in the Wardrobe Book, 1*l.* 19*s.* 7*d.*”

The Chair is in shape similar to the high-backed chairs which were in fashion in this country about a century ago. It is six feet seven inches in height, twenty-five inches in depth, and twenty-eight inches in breadth, measured within-side, across the seat. It is a wide elbow-chair, with a flat seat; and nine inches from the ground immediately under it, is placed the celebrated stone. It rests on a kind of middle frame, and is supported at the corners by four lions couchant. All around, on a level with the stone, was originally ornamented with beautiful tracery, in quarterly divisions, each containing a heater shield (emblazoned with arms), in accordance with the fashion of the pointed arch which prevailed in the thirteenth century. There were originally ten of these divisions, and four of them with the shields remained till the Coronation of George IV.; but they were subsequently stolen, and even the tracery itself is entirely gone in front, so that the stone is now fully exposed to view. The back is terminated by a high pediment, along each angle of which were five crockets on Scotia, or concave moulding. Below the latter, on each side of the pediment, is a smooth flat division, about three inches broad, that once contained decorations, presumed to be armorial bearings, emblazoned in small plates of metal of different sizes and forms, alternately small and large, the

cement for the adhesion of which still remains. The whole chair has been completely covered with gilding and ornamental work, including a regal figure, and a variety of birds, foliage, and drapery, much of which may yet be distinguished on a close inspection. The thickness of the whitening ground, laid on to relieve the leaf gold, may be seen in almost every part. At the back of the seat within side, are some faint traces of a male figure, sitting in a royal robe, a small portion of the bottom of which, together with a foot and shoe (the latter somewhat sharp pointed), are still visible, but they were much more so within memory. Below the elbow, on the left side, is distinguishable a running pattern of oak leaves and acorns, with red-breasts and falcons on the oaken sprays in alternate order; a different pattern of a diapered work is shown on the right, or opposite side, as well as within the tiers of pannelled arches, which adorn the outer sides or back of the chair. These rich ornaments are so much discoloured by the ravages of time, or otherwise damaged by wanton mischief, that it requires an attentive eye to trace them with effect; the best way to do this, is to place the head close to the seat, and then to look upwards with minute and fixed attention. Most of the above ornaments seem to have been wrought by means of minute punctures made in the whitening ground, after the flat gilding was executed; other parts appear as though they had been impressed or stamped with an instrument. Within the spandrils connected with the upper tier of arches at the back, were formerly, according to Mr. Carter, enamelled ornaments representing foliage; but the ornaments thus alluded to were not *enamelled*; they consisted of small sprigs, depicted on a metallic ground, either gilt or silvered, and covered with plain or coloured *glass*, as may yet be seen in three or four places. The drapery within the panels, as far as can now be traced, was composed of running patterns of vine and oak branches. Amongst the other disfigurements of this chair, many nails, large and small, with tacks and brass pins, have been driven all over the angles, both on the inner and outer sides, most probably to fasten the cloth of gold or tissue with which it has



been covered at the times of coronations. The lions which support the chair have also been much injured at different times ; a new face was obliged to be made for one of them previous to the coronation of George IV. They are but clumsily executed, and are very defective in point of form.



Notwithstanding the assertion of Walsingham, that Edward I. gave this chair for the use of the officiating priests of Westminster, there is every reason to believe that it has been regularly used as the *Coronation Chair* of all our sovereigns, from the time of Edward II. Strutt gives a



representation of the latter monarch in a chair of state, which was evidently intended for that under notice. Camden calls it "the Royal Chair, or throne," and Selden, speaking of this venerable remain, employs the words, "on it are the coronations of our sovereigns." Ogilby, in his account of the Coronation of Charles II., expressly designates it by the name of *St. Edward's* ancient Chair, which, he says (covered all over with cloth of gold), was first placed on the right side of the altar; and, at a subsequent part of the ceremony, removed into "the middle of the aisle, and set right over against the altar, whither the king went and sate down in it, and then the Archbishop brought *St. Edward's* crown from the altar, and put it on his head." James II. was crowned in the same chair, as appears from Sandford; so were also William of Orange, Queen Anne, and all our succeeding sovereigns to the present time.

During the preparations for the coronation of George IV., the frame work of this chair was strengthened with iron braces, and the Prophetic Stone more securely fixed. At the same time the old crockets and turrets were sawn off, and new ones of a different character substituted under the direction of the *upholsterer* employed by the Board of Works! Soon after the ceremony, however, the new crockets, &c., were taken off, and the chair left in a more delapidated condition than before.

We have drawn thus largely from the facts collected by the antiquary respecting this chair, not merely because it is one of the most curious relics of by-gone days to be found within the Abbey, being nearly 600 years old, but because it contains a relic to which greater importance was attached in olden time than to any that we have now existing. This is the *Prophetic Stone*, brought to this country from Scone, in Scotland, by Edward I. Mr. Brayley has written the most complete history of the stone that is extant, and to him, therefore, we are principally indebted for the particulars concerning it. The venerable stone is placed in the frame work of the chair beneath the seat, and has at each end a circular iron handle affixed to a staple let

into the stone itself, so that it may be lifted up. It is of an oblong form, but irregular, measuring twenty-six inches in length, sixteen inches and three-quarters in breadth, and ten inches and a half in thickness. As far as can be ascertained from inspecting it in its present enclosed situation, it bears much resemblance to the Dun stones, such as are brought from Dundee in Scotland, and used for various purposes. It is a sandy granular stone, a sort of debris of sienite, chiefly quartz, with light and reddish-coloured felspar, and also light and dark mica, with probably some dark green hornblend intermixed. Some fragments of a reddish grey slate, or schist, are likewise included in its composition. On the upper side (but hidden by the seat of the chair), there is also a dark brownish red-coloured flinty pebble, which, from its hardness, has not been cut through, though immediately crossed by the indent above mentioned. Our early historians have described this stone very inaccurately, and if we are to conclude that many of the important facts related by them were recorded with as little inquiry, it will tend materially to shake our belief in their accuracy. The most cursory view would at once convince the spectator that the Prophetic Stone is not *marble*, and yet we have the following descriptions of it by the undermentioned celebrated historians. Fordun calls it "a marble chair, carved with ancient art by skilful workmen;" and again, "a marble stone wrought like a chair." Brece styles it "a chair of marble," and "the fatal marble." Bishop Leslie, "a marble chair;" and Holinshed, "a chair of marble," and a "marble stone." It is obvious that all the above writers, as well as many more who call this rude unwrought stone "a chair," refer to the same object, and what that really is, the preceding description will clearly testify. The inaccuracy of those writers can only be accounted for by supposing that they used the word "marble" as synonymous with "stone," or that they each borrowed the description from a common source, without making inquiry whether it was correct or not. There is no reason to believe that the stone was ever lost, or we might be inclined to suppose that one had been substituted in its place.



Tradition intimates that this stone was originally brought from Egypt, and it is a remarkable fact, when mineralogically considered, that the *substances* composing it accord in the grains, with the sienite of Pliny, the same as Pompey's Pillar at Alexandria; but the particles are much smaller. Geologists will perhaps determine how far this may agree with any formation succeeding the sienite in the Egyptian quarries. The stone was believed to have been introduced into Egypt by the Israelites, and to have been the very one on which Jacob rested his head, when he saw the Vision of the Ladder reaching to heaven, with the angels ascending and descending in the plains of Luz. Its known history carries it back to a period so remote, that this legend was scarcely necessary to procure for it respect and veneration, and whether it were originally an Egyptian or a Celtic monument, it furnishes a very remarkable proof of the wide diffusion of a most ancient practice observed in the inauguration of kings, namely, the placing them upon or near to an elevated stone, at the moment of investing them with the plenitude of regal power. The custom had its origin in the east, where it spread extensively, and is alluded to in many passages of the Old Testament, and it certainly became general among the Celtic and Scandinavian nations. It was probably the monks of Westminster who first gave currency to the opinion that this stone was Jacob's pillar; for the most ancient record in which it was thus described, was a tablet, formerly suspended above the chair in St. Edward's chapel.

The fullest account of this stone given by any single writer, is that by Fordun, who in a work written by him in the reign of Edward III., has devoted an entire chapter to its early history; the substance of his statement is as follows:—

“There was a certain king of Spain, of the Scottish race, called Milo, having many sons; one, however, named Simon Brek, he loved above all the others, although he was neither the elder nor the heir. His father, therefore, sent him to Ireland with an army, and gave him a *marble chair*, carved with very ancient art by skilful workmen, in which the kings of Spain of the Scottish nation, were wont



to set when inaugurated, from which cause it was carefully brought into his region, as if it were an anchor. This Simon having reached the above island with a great army, reduced it under his dominion, and reigned in it many years. He placed the aforesaid stone, or chair, at Themor, the royal residence, a noted place, at which his successors were accustomed to reside, distinguished with kingly honours. *Gathelus*, as some say, brought this chair, with other regal ornaments, with him from Egypt into Spain. Others relate that Simon Brek, having anchored on the Irish coast, was forced by contrary winds to withdraw his anchors from the billowy surge, and whilst strenuously labouring to that end, a stone in the form of a chair, cut out of marble, was hauled up with the anchor into the ship. Receiving this, both as a precious boon from heaven, and as a certain presage of future dominion, he, trembling with excessive joy, adored his gods for the gift, as if they had absolutely appointed him to the kingdom and the crown. It was there prophesied, likewise, that he and his posterity should reign wherever that stone should be found; and this divination some one made into a metrical prophesy, which was very popular among his people."

Mr. Taylor, in his "Glory of Regality," says, that an ancient Irish prophecy existed to the effect, that the possession of this stone was essential to the preservation of regal power. It runs thus:—"The race of Scots of the true blood, if this prophecy be not false, unless they possess the stone of fate, shall fail to obtain regal power." King Kenneth caused the leonine verses following to be engraved on the chair; they are thus rendered by Camden:—

" Or Fate is blind,  
Or Scots shall find,  
Where'er this stone  
A royal throne."

These lines on the stone were in Latin, and the prophecy reconciled many haughty Scotchmen to the union in Queen Anne's reign. It is remarkable, that since the extinction of the Stuart family, the prophecy is fulfilled in

the claims of the house of Brunswick ; the reigning monarch being now the legitimate heir of both lines.

Holinshed, in his chronicle, gives a long account of Galethus, just mentioned ; who is there said to have been a Greek, “ the son of Cecrops, who builded the city of Athens.” After leaving Greece, Galethus resided some time in Egypt, where he married *Scota*, the daughter of king Pharaoh ; but being alarmed by the judgment pronounced by Moses, who was then in Egypt, he quitted that country with many followers and landed in Spain ; here he “ builded a citie which he named Brigantia,” yet not without great opposition from the native Spaniards. Having made peace with his neighbours, “ he sat upon his marble stone in Brigantia, where he gave laws and ministered justice unto his people, thereby to maintain them in wealth and quietness. This stone was in fashion like a seat or chair, having such a fatal destiny (as the Scots say) following it, that wherever it should be placed, there should the Scottish men reigne and have the supreme governaunce.” From Galethus and the other invaders who accompanied him, Ireland received the name of *Scotia*, which it retained till within a century of the English invasion. Fergus, a descendant of Simon Brek, before mentioned, being compelled to leave Ireland in consequence of the civil wars, led a body of emigrants to Argylshire ; and brought with him the stone of destiny, which he deposited at Dunstaffnage, about three hundred years before the birth of Christ. All his descendants were installed on this stone, and it was believed that when the rightful heir took his seat, the stone emitted loud harmonious sounds ; but that it remained silent whenever a pretender attempted to be crowned !

Whatever may have been the real early history of this stone, disregarding altogether the statement that it was brought from Egypt or even from Spain, as above mentioned, there can be little doubt but that it was intimately connected with some of the most impressive religious observances of the early Irish, and that from them it was transferred into Scotland. We learn from the Scriptures, that the earliest altars were made from unhewn stone ; and

the worship of stone pillars was extremely common in the East. The assembly of a nation was often held in a circle of stones; Homer in the *Odyssey* relates how—

“The old man early rose, walked forth, and sate,  
On polished stone, before his palace gate;  
With unguent smooth the lucid marble shone,  
Where ancient Neleus sate, a rustic throne.”

Among the northern nations, the practice was to form a circle of large stones, commonly twelve in number, in the middle of which was one set up much larger than the rest. This was the royal seat, and the nobles occupied those surrounding it, which served also as a barrier to keep off the people who stood without. Here the leading men of the kingdom delivered their suffrages, and placed the king on his seat of dignity; from such places afterwards, justice was freely dispensed. The knowledge we possess of that wonderful antiquity of our country, Stonehenge, in Wiltshire, being used for religious purposes by the ancient Britons, is another proof of the great reverence paid to the unhewn stone under certain circumstances.

The prophetic stone remained in the possession of the Scotch till the reign of Edward I., when that monarch having defeated John Baliol in a desperate battle near Dunbar, in April 1296, and quickly subduing all Scotland, resolved to deprive the nation of every vestage of its independence, and accordingly removed this venerated treasure to England, along with the other regal valuables. Hardyng in his ryming chronicle says,

“And as he came homeward by Scone away,  
The *Regal*, there of Scotland then he brought,  
And sent it forth to Westminster; for ay  
To be there in a chair clenely wrought,  
For a mass priest to syt in, when he ought.  
Which there was standing beside the Shrine,  
In a chair of *old tyme made full fyne*.”

Edward I., when he returned to London, offered the regalia of Scotland, amongst which was the famous stone, on the shrine of the Confessor, in acknowledgment of the



miral is represented as ascending, whilst the Royal George, in which he was drowned, is sinking. His figure is almost devoid of drapery, and has been sculptured exceedingly well. It stands out from the marble slab from which it is cut, in fine relief, and will repay an attentive inspection. On the right-hand side, and nearly opposite, is the most beautiful monument in the Abbey, if not in the world; it is to the memory of JOSEPH GASCOIGNE, NIGHTINGALE, and his wife Lady Elizabeth, and was sculptured by Roubiliac. It is his masterpiece; and for correctness of arrangement, attention to minutia, and truth of expression, is unequalled. The lower part represents a sepulchre, the doors of which are open, and from them has partially issued the figure of a skeleton with a mantle around it, and holding in its hand a long dart, which it appears to be in the act of throwing at the figure of Lady Nightingale, who is dying in the arms of her husband. They are placed on a marble slab above, and the whole of the figures are nearly the size of life. The figure of the skeleton was pronounced by the celebrated John Hunter, the anatomist, to be a perfect representation of nature, and its appearance—issuing stealthily from the tomb, partially covered with drapery, and grasping the dart at the end with such eagerness to hurl it at his victim as to disarrange the feathers, is well calculated to convey a vivid impression of the “king of terrors.” The expression of the husband’s face, too, could only be produced by a Roubiliac; “his horror and eager motion can only be described by such actors as Garrick was and Kemble is,” was the critique of a lover of the arts a few years since, and is perhaps the best description that can be given. The figure of Lady Nightingale is also a fine work of art; the foot and hands are beautifully sculptured, and her position is the conception of a man of genius. It is almost impossible to convey an adequate idea of the impression produced on the mind of the spectator by this monument; but its effect may be conceived from the fact that it is generally the one best remembered after leaving the Abbey. Although the tomb is erected to the memory of Mr. and Lady Nightin-

gale, the monument records the death of the lady only. Against the East wall of this chapel is a tomb to the memory of SUSANNA JANE DAVISON, in which the artist has copied the idea of the above, but it is badly expressed. Near it is the tomb of the COUNTESS OF KERRY, and of the Earl her husband; it is deserving notice for a most affectionate epitaph by the husband, "whom she rendered during thirty-one years the happiest of mankind." For a long period after her death, the Earl was in the habit of constantly visiting the tomb and giving vent to his grief. At the bottom of the lady's epitaph, in large letters, are the words, "*in death they were not divided.*" The Earl was buried in the same coffin as his lady upon his decease, which took place about nineteen years from the date of hers; he had previously retired from the world, and passed the remainder of his days in piety and seclusion. It is not often that a tomb recording such long continued affection can be found. In this chapel, against the wall in which the door is placed, is a plain marble slab to the memory of the great philosopher, SIR HUMPHREY DAVY. It is as unassuming as him whose death it records; but will not on that account be regarded with less veneration by the lover of science and modest worth. The bust of MATHEW BAILLIE, the eminent surgeon, by Chantry, will likewise not be passed by unregarded. The other tombs do not require description, their beauties and defects are of a kind that it can be easily appreciated.

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## CHAPTER XI.

A critical description of the Monuments in the North and South aisles, and West end of the nave.—Appearance of the Abbey from this part.—Monuments in the North-west aisle.

THE tomb of GENERAL WOLFE separates the chapel just described from the North aisle. The General is represented dying at the moment of victory, in the arms of a sol-

dier, the expression of whose face is very striking. The sorrow depicted in the countenance of the General's highland serjeant is not less so ; and the alto-relief representing the landing at Quebec, conveys a lively picture of the difficulties the troops had to contend with before they could effect a landing. The admirer of military glory will pause before this tomb, to the memory of one whose heroism well deserved the national tribute of respect it has received, by the erection of this monument.

On the face of a tomb that covers the remains of the **COUNTESS OF LANCASTER**, are the mouldering remnants of some paintings, which would not probably attract attention unless pointed out. They are curious specimens of the ornaments with which it was formerly the custom to adorn the last resting places of the rich and noble. A similar species of decoration is to be seen on the monument of **Edmund, DUKE OF LANCASTER**, placed near the above.

Passing several, that of Lord Eland's wife, **LADY GOUVERNET**, will attract attention from the peculiar appearance of the face of a mourner weeping over her. The light falls upon the figure in such a way that the nose appears like a hole in the face, and completely destroys the effect intended to be produced.

The other monuments principally deserving notice, are those of the Earl of Pembroke, Aymer de Valence ; Ann of Cleves, the wife of Henry VIII. ; Anne, Queen of Richard III. ; and Sebert, the founder of the Abbey.

Passing by Poet's Corner, which has been previously described, the visitor now enters the South aisle ; the first monument in which, requiring a detailed notice, is that of **SIR CLOUDESLEY SHOVELL**. It is of the composite order, and the knight is represented reclining on a cushion under a canopy of State. This has been ridiculed by Addison as a most inappropriate situation for an English admiral, and the criticism is just. The figures are not badly executed, and at the base is a spirited representation of a storm, in which a ship is striking on a rock, and being wrecked ; showing the cause of the admiral's death.



The next monument, to the memory of WILLIAM WRAGG, Esq., also represents a shipwreck, by which this gentleman lost his life. His son was saved in a wonderful manner on a large package, supported by a black slave, who was cast on shore off the coast of Holland. The sculpture is well done.

The amiable DR. ISAAC WATTS has a small tribute to his memory erected here. A bust of him is placed above, and underneath in a circle he is sitting in deep contemplation, while an angel is represented explaining to him the wonders of the creation. The admirers of this good man will not pass by without bestowing on his tomb at least a momentary glance.

The next, to the memory of the unfortunate MAJOR ANDRE, is of statuary marble in basso relievo, and represents the interior of the American General's tent, with the Major bearing a flag of truce to solicit his pardon ; or that he might be put to death as a soldier, and not die by the hands of the common executioner. The figures have been much injured, which is said to have been the consequence of national feeling ; considering that it is not an old monument, it is certainly surprising that it should have been so mutilated, unless intentionally.

COLONEL TOWNSEND'S monument consists of a pyramid of red and white marble, against which are two Indians in the complete costume of their country ; the one holding a gun, the other a tomahawk. They support a sarcophagus, on which, in basso relievo, is a representation of the field of battle and the death of the colonel. The figures, particularly those of the Indians, are deserving notice.

Near the last is one to GENERAL HARGRAVE, by Roubiliac, of which Malcolm says, " Europe can barely show a parallel." It exhibits the resurrection of a body from a sarcophagus, and of a conflict between Time and Death, in which the former proving victorious, is in the act of breaking the dart of his antagonist. The expression of Hargrave's face is very striking ; it is a mixture of wonder and joy ; every limb seems to strain forward, and every muscle

is exerted to escape from the grasp of Death. The truth with which the pyramid is executed also deserves praise ; a plain surface is converted by the chisel into a mass of stone falling in every direction. The figure of Time is good ; and the old broken feathers of his wings, torn with age and long use, are well worth examination. The skeleton seems to hang in agony by the broken spear, which is snapped by Time on his knee, and the coronet is dropping from the brow of Death, to show that his dominion is at an end.

Over the door leading into the cloisters, is the stately monument of GENERAL WADE. In the centre is a marble pillar, enriched with military trophies, highly finished. Time appears endeavouring to pull them off the pillar, but is defeated in his attempt by Fame, and below is a medallion with the general's head upon it.

VISCOUNT HOWE's death is lamented by a figure, intended for the Genius of the province of Massachusetts Bay, in a mournful posture. It has been described as " a representation of melancholy intoxication ;" but though the artist has probably failed in realizing his conception, the design is by no means mediocre.

The bust of Dr. ZACHERY PEARCE is finely sculptured, and, as a specimen of this form of monument, will vie with some of those in Poet's Corner. It is said to be an excellent likeness of the original.

A short distance from the last, is one of the most singular monuments in the Abbey, so far as concerns the design. It is in memory of VICE ADMIRAL TYRRELL, and represents the situation of a ship at the bottom of the sea, so that to view it properly, " the speculator must suppose himself in a diving bell." As the admiral did not perish from shipwreck, this must be considered as an exhibition of the sculptor's fancy, and of its merits the spectator will be the best judge.

In the south-west corner is a fine statue of JAMES CRAGGS, Secretary of State in 1718. The epitaph is by Pope, and it is pleasing to see the efforts of the sculptor and the poet exerted to preserve the memory of a man whose worth and talents raised him from the humble si-

tuation of a shoemaker's son, to the attainment of the highest honours of the state.

The next is a monument of great size, being thirty-six feet high, erected to the honour of CAPTAIN JAMES CORNWALL. At the back is a pyramid of rich Sicilian jasper, beautifully variegated and finely polished, with a base of the same. Against the pyramid is a rock of white marble, with plants growing in the interstices, with cannon, anchors, and flags at the sides. In the rock are two cavities, one containing a Latin epitaph, the other a view of the sea fight before Toulon, in which Cornwall was killed. In the foreground are two ships fiercely engaged, and on the rock two figures, intended to represent Britannia in the character of Minerva, and Fame. The latter is presenting a medallion of the hero to the former, and at the same time exhibits it to public view. The inscription on the monument has much suffered from time, the marble having corroded.

The visitor will now have arrived at the west end of the Abbey, under the two great towers. From under the doors at this place, the best view of the interior of the Abbey can be obtained. The "long drawn aisles and fretted vault" are extended before him in all their beauty and perfection; and the "solemn light" from the coloured windows give an effect to the scene that can only be appreciated by the spectator. The long row of columns by which the building is supported, terminate at the eastern end, and enclose the Chapel of Edward the Confessor. They afford a pleasing example of the grace and lightness of the Gothic style of architecture. The roof is very richly adorned with bright gilded ribs and key stones, all varied in complicated scrolls. It will be perceived, that notwithstanding the strong bars of iron which cross the intercolumniations near the great pillars of the tower, must greatly contribute to their support, yet they are not sufficient to prevent those vast clusters from each tending to a point in the centre of the space under it. Perhaps they have thus bent by some unknown cause many years past. No danger may be apprehended for centuries; but Mr. Malcolm,



whose attention was for a long time so entirely devoted to this building that his opinion is deserving of attention, says, "If I dare prophecy, this will be the spot where this venerable pile will rend asunder, and the adjoining parts accumulate in one dreadful ruin on that centre."

Above the west door is the great window, containing effigies in stained glass of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses and Aaron, and the twelve patriarchs; the arms of the founder of the Abbey, King Sebert, Edward the Confessor, Elizabeth, George II., and the Bishop of Rochester. On either side are lancet-shaped windows; the lower part of the one on the right hand is filled by the figure of an old man in a crimson vest and blue and yellow mantle. The colours, both of the drapery and of the canopy above, are wonderfully clear and brilliant. The figure is supposed to represent Edward the Confessor. In the window on the other side is a king completely armed, of the House of Lancaster, as appears by his emblem, the red rose. It is a more finished performance than the other window, and does not appear to have been executed by the same artist, the colours being far superior.

Over this door is likewise the monument erected at the national expense to WILLIAM PITT. He is represented in his usual costume as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to the right of the base of the statue, History, in a reclining attitude, is recording the chief acts of his administration; and Anarchy, on the left, lies subdued and chained at his feet.

Between the pillars on the south side of the nave, stands the monument of CAPTAIN MONTAGUE; it was one of the first executed by Flaxman, who introduced detached monuments into the Abbey. In front of the pedestal is a representation of Lord Howe's Victory, and the deceased having been the only Captain who fell during the engagement, his tomb was erected at the public cost.

The first important object in the north-west aisle, is the bust of SIR GODFREY KNELLER, the celebrated painter in the reign of Charles II., and of several of his successors. The epitaph was written by Pope, and contains many of

those extravagant encomiums that were once thought essential in such compositions.

Passing several monuments that present nothing particular to attract attention, we come to a small tablet to the memory of THOMAS BANKS, the eminent sculptor, and who has furnished so many of the chaste and elegant monuments that adorn the Abbey. His name is only recorded on a plain marble tablet, but his works around him, "the storied urns and animated busts," are sufficient to perpetuate his fame, and his own simple tomb corroborates the truth of his epitaph, that "his character as a man reflected honour on human nature."

The monument of MISS ANN WHYTALL is exceedingly beautiful, and one of the best efforts of Bacon. Two figures representing Innocence and Peace, with their emblems, the dove and olive branch, are leaning lightly against a pedestal, on which is placed an urn. Without any of the "tonsil appurtenances" that are so lavishly spread over many of the tombs around, this one is more full of the poetry of sculpture, and will probably engage a much larger share of attention.

The Right Honourable SPENCER PERCIVAL, who was murdered by Bellingham in the lobby of the House of Commons, has a monument placed high up in a window. He is falling into the arms of the officers of the House, and the members are seen running out to witness the catastrophe. A figure of the assassin is placed on the left; and there are two figures, Truth and Temperance, with their emblems, a mirror, and a bridle, placed at the feet of another statue of Percival, who is lying on a couch. Westmacott was the sculptor.

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## CHAPTER XII.

The Choir—Description of the Screen—The Curious Mosaic Pavement—The Stalls, Altar, and Pulpit—Monuments on the Screen, and in the North Aisle.

THE Screen, divides the Choir from the Nave, and is a fine illustration of the excellency of modern sculpture, though the style is Gothic. The screen that preceded the one now erected, although not old, was much decayed, and in style quite out of keeping with the other parts of the building. The screen in St. Edward's Chapel has been already noticed, and this one nearly, if not quite, equals the appearance it must have presented for excellency of design and workmanship when it was in a perfect state. The Choir Screen has been recently erected under the direction of Mr. Blore, and at the expense of the Dean and Chapter of the Abbey. It consists, as the original formerly did, of three ornamental arches; the centre is the entrance into the choir; that on the left-hand side contains the monument of Sir Isaac Newton, and that on the right the Earl of Stanhope. These occupied their present situations before the New Screen was erected, and the architect was therefore compelled to form his plan of it, so that they should be included; and the manner in which he has done this, proves him to be a man of taste and genius. The workmanship of every part is exceedingly delicate and beautiful, and that over the entrance is particularly so. On each side of the door, and at the angles of the Screen, are turrets elaborately worked. On the front and sides are niches containing Edward the Confessor and his queen; Edward the First and Queen Eleanor, and also Henry the Third and his Queen, all of whom had been benefactors of the Abbey. The sculpture of these, and of the whole Screen, will amply repay a little time and attention bestowed on it. Above is the organ which has been recently



decorated, but although much praised, yet certainly the diversity of colours employed are more becoming the coat of a harlequin, than the case of this fine instrument: it does not appear in keeping with the objects around.

The pavement of the Choir is perhaps one of the finest pieces of Mosaic work existing. Malcolm says, after descending two steps of white marble, which cover part of the grand Mosaic platform, we tread on the wreck of the most glorious work in England, venerable through age, costly in its materials, and invaluable for its workmanship. What must have been the beauties of this holy place soon after the completion of the church! The altar-piece, resembling in workmanship its transcendant back in Edward the Confessor's Chapel; the shrine of that saint beaming with rich jewels, gold and silver statues, and other offerings; the side of the choir showing glances of the numerous altars in the chapels, with the rich tombs on the right and left; and the pavement sparkling from reflecting the bright rays of vast tapers and ever-burning lamps! This pavement is separated from the modern one by a screen of iron rails. The materials of which the pavement is composed, are lapis lazuli, jasper, porphyry, alabaster, lydian, and serpentine marbles, and touchstone. It was made at the charge of Abbot Ware; the stones are said to have been purchased in Rome, and the workmen were brought from abroad. It was laid in the year 1272, so that it is 566 years old, yet, where it has not been injured by the changes which were made in erecting the altar that has since been removed, it is very perfect, and displays exceedingly minute workmanship; several of the pieces of marble are not more than one-fourth of an inch in length, and the largest not more than four inches, excepting a few, around which the others are placed. The centre of the design is a large circle, whose centre is a circular plane of porphyry, three spans and a quarter in diameter; round it are stars of green, red, and white, inclosed by a band of alabaster, and without a border of lozenges, red and green: the half lozenges contain triangles of the same colour. A dark line once held brass letters, but they are

destroyed. The extensive lines of this great circle run into four smaller circles, facing the cardinal points; that to the East had a centre of orange and green variegated, round it a circle of red and green wedges; on the outside of that, lozenges of the same colours, and completed by a dark border. To the north, the centre has a sexagon centre of variegated green and yellow, round it a band of porphyry, and a dark border. The west circle is nearly similar. The south has a black centre within a variegated octagon. A large lozenge enclosed all these circles, and is formed by a double border of olive colour, within which, on one corner only, are one hundred and thirty-eight circles intersecting each other, and made by four oval pieces inclosing a lozenge. The other parts vary in figure, but are equally rich in ornament and device. The above lozenge has a circle on each of its sides to the north-east and south-east, containing lozenges of green, red stars, triangles, sexagons, and yellow stars. The whole of the great lozenge is enclosed by a square, the sides to the cardinal points.

The design of the figures on this pavement was to represent the time the world would last, and some verses were formerly to be deciphered containing an account of the manner in which the calculation could be made; the age to be attained by the world according to this dictum was 19,683 years!

The sides of the choir are of wood and divided by slender columns, with tasteful capitals, into arches, adorned with foliage and pinnacles. The transepts are entered by a door on each side. The enriched canopies of the stalls under them are exceedingly beautiful. They are thirty-two in number, beside those of the dean and the subdean, at the west-end higher than the rest; lower than these are the seats of the Westminster scholars, who attend during Divine service in their surplices, and chant the responses.

The altar table is of oak, perhaps nearly as old as the Reformation; and the altar was created under the direction of Benjamin Wyatt, the architect. It represents as nearly as possible the Gothic original, which was removed

when the late altar was erected, by the desire of Queen Anne, who presented it to the Abbey; it formerly stood in Whitehall Chapel, but being in the Grecian style of architecture, did not harmonize with the other portions of the Abbey. And good taste has been shown in having it removed, and the present erected in its place.

The pulpit stands opposite the north-west pillar of the tower, and is supported by a clustered column, spreading into a sexagon. On each corner is a small pillar, terminating in a cherub. Within the pannels is a flower of twelve leaves. A palm tree of exquisite workmanship supports the sounding board, the top and sides of which are pinnacled. The lower part is richly inlaid with dark wood.

Proceeding from the choir, through the screen entrance, the monument of SIR ISAAC NEWTON claims attention. As before stated, it forms a portion of the screen, and represents the philosopher in a recumbent position leaning on his right arm, which is supported by four folio volumes, on the backs of which are inscribed the titles of the subjects on which his knowledge was most profound. Over him is a figure of Astronomy, not well executed, sitting on a globe, on which is traced the path of the comet of 1680. Underneath the figure of Newton is a tablet, on which several figures are cut in bas relief, representing the sciences that chiefly engaged his attention. The sun is being weighed by a steelyard, emblematical of his discovery of the principle of gravity; but the devcie is too extravagant to be viewed with satisfaction, although from some critics it has received unqualified praise.

On the other side, in the recess, is a monument to the memory of the EARL OF STANHOPE. The honour of being placed side by side with Newton, might have been reserved for one more celebrated among the world's benefactors, but the private virtues of the Earl, and his exertions while Minister of this country, to promote its happiness and prosperity, sufficiently qualified him to have his monument placed so near to that of our great Philosopher.

The next monument of importance is that of THOMAS THYNNE, Esq., who was murdered in Pall Mall, on the 12th



Feb. 1682, by three ruffians, who shot at him as he was passing in his coach. Upon the pedestal, in bas relief, the story of the murder is depicted. The deceased was betrothed to a rich heiress, whom the Count Coningsmarck was desirous of marrying, and finding there was no way of accomplishing this while Mr. Thynne was alive, it is believed he hired the ruffians to perpetrate the murder. The lady, however, suspecting that he had been concerned in the crime, declined his offers. The principal figure on the monument represents Mr. Thynne in a dying posture; the figures in relievo are shamefully mutilated.

The figure of DR. RICHARD BUSBY will probably be regarded with a more than ordinary degree of reverence by the youthful visitor, who has heard of the rigid discipline he maintained while master of Westminster school. If report speaks true, the birch and ferrule were exercised with greater severity during his scholastic reign, than at any period before or since.

Proceeding again into the north aisle, the first important monument is by Bacon, Junr., sacred to the memory of CHARLES AGAR, EARL of NORMANTON and Archbishop of Dublin; and the manner in which it has been sculptured, renders it deserving an attentive notice. He is seen at full length, and on his left are three attendant clergymen, on the right are a poor woman and two children, and a little lower is a poor man leaning on a crutch, all of whom the Archbishop is relieving. Both the design and execution of the figures are exceedingly good.

A little further on is a small tablet to the memory of DR. BURNEY, "the unrivalled chief and scientific historian of the tuneful art."—And at a short distance an equally unostentatious slab of marble shows that the composer of so many of our sweetest melodies, HENRY PURCELL, has a place amongst the illustrious dead.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

Monuments in the North Transept,—with remarks on the general character of these erected in the Abbey.

IN this transept the first that deserves particular notice is the BISHOP OF BANGOR'S. It is generally admired for the beautiful figure of Religion represented in a mournful attitude, leaning on a rock, and bearing in her hand the sign of Christianity—a cross. On the other side, an angel is pointing to it as an emblem of hope and consolation. Both the figures are exceedingly well designed and sculptured.

The figure adjoining, which has been erected to the memory of ELIZABETH WARREN, and is known to the visitors of the Abbey as the SOLDIER'S WIDOW, is the masterpiece of its sculptor, Westmacott, and is more touchingly affecting, from its simplicity, and the association that connect themselves with it, than any other in the Abbey. It represents the widow of a soldier, wayworn and disconsolate, with an infant at her breast, and her little bundle at her side, sitting upon a stone, exhausted by fatigue. Her hair is disordered, and her face presents an expression of dispondency that must find its way to every feeling heart. The drapery of the figure has had much attention paid to it, and the coarse stuff of the outer garment is finely imitative. This figure is one of the most beautiful examples of modern sculpture, and finely contrasts, as a monument, with the unmeaning allegories and superfluous decorations of the tombs of former ages. Nothing can be in better taste than this simple figure as a memorial of the amiable lady whose benevolence it illustrates, and whose memory it will perpetuate.

GENL. GUEST has a tomb adjoining on which is a bust finely executed, and the Military trophies around are well arranged.

The monument of ADMIRAL WATSON is one that reflects honour on the East India Company, at whose expense it was erected. The Admiral is represented holding a palm branch in his right hand, with his left extended. On one side is the female figure of an Asiatic, of great beauty and elegance of drapery. On the right, chained to the foot of a tree, an East Indian is seen, whose countenance expresses the grief and pain, not unmixed with resentment, that might naturally be expected from a man in such a situation. His hands are behind him, and his legs are crossed. It is a very fine figure. It was Admiral Watson who restocked Calcutta in 1757, and relieved the unfortunate beings who had been confined in the black hole there.—One of Bacon's best efforts is the memorial of the EARL OF HALIFAX. His bust is good, and a silk-tasselled bag on the pedestal very natural in appearance. The work throughout is remarkable for the delicacy that distinguished this artist's productions.

SIR THOMAS WINTINGHAM, Bart., M. D., is seen, on a bas relief on his tomb, visiting a poor family and relieving the children, and an old man on a bed of straw. The figure of his lady weeping at the foot of a sarcophagus is but poorly executed.

The memory of the amiable philanthropist, JONAS HANWAY, did not require the bust that is here placed to preserve his memory from oblivion; but it is a pleasing testimony of his virtues. The face has a most benevolent expression, and the figures around are well suited to the subject. A boy almost naked is receiving clothing, for which also a second is supplicating. A third, who appears fitted out and trained for the sea, supports a ship, the rudder in one hand, and with the other pointing to his benefactor.

The full-length statue of FRANCIS HORNER, is a pleasing departure from the usual form of monuments. The figure is commanding, and the face expressive of the character of the original. It is the work of Chantry.

GENERAL HOPE has a beautiful female figure bending over his coffin-shaped sarcophagus, which ought not to be



passed by unnoticed. The design is simple, and for that reason far more effective than many of the elaborate works around. The female is intended for an Indian, lamenting the loss of her benefactor and protector.

The monument of WARREN HASTINGS, the Governor General of India, and celebrated for his impeachment by Sheridan, Burke, and other eloquent members of the House of Commons, has a well-sculptured bust of the deceased upon it, by Bacon. For this and the epitaph, it is alone remarkable.

SIR EYRE COOTE'S monument, adjoining, is more elegant, and will command a greater share of attention. There are two prominent figures upon it; the one an Asiatic captive, who is weeping by the side of a trophy of Indian armour, indicating the subjection of that empire; and the other is a figure of Fame, who is placing a medallion of the deceased upon a trophy. The figure of the captive is finely sculptured; his position; the contour of his limbs—large and well developed—and the strong expression of his face, altogether, show the care that must have been bestowed upon it by the sculptor, Banks.

Amongst the modern works of art within the Abbey, that can vie with many of the finest productions of antiquity, is the statue of JOHN KEMBLE, the tragedian, who is represented on a pedestal in the character of *Cato*. It is the work of Flaxman, and requires no praise to recommend it to notice. The simple majesty of form, and the dignified expression of the countenance, mark it as one of the best productions of its sculptor, and render it a fitting monument for the eminent man whose memory it preserves.

A collection of emblematical figures and devices form a monument, erected at the expense of the nation, to the memories of Captains BAYNE, BLAIR, and MANNERS, who were killed in battle under Admiral Rodney. One or two of the figures are well designed, particularly that of Fame. The statue of Britannia is also well proportioned, but the accumulation of military trophies does not add much to the general effect, and strongly contrasts with the simplicity of the monument just described.

The one in memory of the EARL OF MANSFIELD is the best work of Flaxman's in the Abbey. It was erected by a private gentleman, some years after the Earl's death, out of respect to his memory, although, shortly previous to his decease, he had requested that no memorial of this kind should be erected. The opinion expressed by an eminent critic on another monument in the Abbey, described hereafter, may with strict justice be applied to this,—“England does not contain a finer specimen of sepulchral remembrance.” The Earl is represented sitting in his robes, as Lord Chief Justice, on the judgment seat, which is placed on a circular elevation of peculiar elegance. In his left hand he holds a scroll of parchment; his right hand rests on his knees, and his left foot is a little advanced. This attitude is taken from the celebrated painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and is executed with so much spirit and judgment by the sculptor, that it has the appearance of being done from the life. On his right hand is a figure of Justice, holding a balance equally poised; and on his left hand Wisdom is seen reading in the book of laws. Between the statues of Wisdom and Justice is a trophy, composed of the Earl's family arms, surmounted by the coronet, the mantle of honour, the fasces, or rods of justice, and the curtana, or sword of mercy. On the back of the chair is the Earl's motto, “*Uni Aquus Virtuti*” (Equal to virtue only) inclosed in a wreath of laurel; under it is a figure of death, as represented by the ancients—a beautiful youth, leaning on an extinguished torch; and on each side is a funeral altar. The figure of the youth is a fine study for the artist; every limb is well proportioned, and it adds very much to the completeness of the monument. The sculptor has shown exceeding good taste in placing it behind the chair, not only on account of its being the more appropriate situation for it, but because it prevents the appearance of nakedness that would otherwise be seen. This monument is the first that was placed between the pillars of the Abbey, without a wall to block up the arch and destroy the beauty of the building. In opposing general custom, and acting on his own opinion in this respect, Flaxman exhibited his usual

judgment ; and his example will do much towards giving monumental sculpture a much higher character as a branch of the fine arts than it has hitherto enjoyed.

The next is a monument of great magnificence, erected at the expense of the country, to the memory of WILLIAM PITT, EARL OF CHATHAM. It has been called "not only a national tribute to superior excellence, but a national memento to what a height her sons have carried the noble art of Sculpture." The principal figure is that of the Earl, who is represented in his robes in the act of addressing the House of Lords. The attitude is graceful and natural, and the countenance expressive. Underneath are Prudence and Fortitude, with their appropriate symbols ; the first with a serpent twisted round a mirror, the second clothed in a lion's skin. The action of the latter figure contrasts well with the quiet and contemplative position of Prudence. Britannia and Neptune are well sculptured ; Britannia holds in her hand the emblem of the sovereignty of the sea, the trident of Neptune ; and he is leaning on a dolphin, with a severe countenance and agitated action, which is opposed by the great ease in the figure of the Earth, who reclines on a terrestrial globe, with her head crowned with fruit, which also lies in profusion at the foot of the pyramid. The whole is highly creditable to the taste and genius of Bacon.

The sculptor has exerted the utmost of his abilities in the memorial to the DUKE OF NEWCASTLE ; but although it occupies a considerable space, and the expense of erecting it must have been very great, it is not calculated to attract much attention. The figures on it are not badly sculptured, but the want of that simplicity which is to be found in the works of modern artists, is sadly deficient.

A striking contrast to the last is the statue of GEORGE CANNING, representing him addressing the House of Commons. It is full of dignity and grace, and the attitude is noble and commanding. Chantry, in this statue, and the one to the memory of WATT, has shown the superiority of the modern school of monumental sculpture. Without any extraneous decorations, or unmeaning and foolish allegories, he presents to us a form, which, without even the ad-



vantage of Roman costume, at once attracts and fixes attention, by its truth to nature. The figure of Canning will long remain a memorial of the statesman's worth and the sculptor's genius.

SIR PETER WARREN's memory is preserved by the specimen of the skill of Roubiliac, which is placed close adjoining the last figure. It is of white marble, and represents Hercules placing a bust of the Knight, who was a Vice Admiral in our navy, upon a pedestal. Britannia, with a wreath of withered laurel in her hand, inclines towards it, and around are various emblematical devices.

The monument of CHARLES JAMES FOX represents him falling into the arms of Liberty, while an African, of great proportions, is in a respectful attitude, thanking him for his exertions to procure the liberty of the slave. The figures are well sculptured, but on the whole, this memorial is not very pleasing, and does not create any particular impression.

At a short distance from the last is a monument to the memory of SIR STAMFORD RAFFLES, who is represented seated on a handsomely-moulded pedestal. The figure is well proportioned, and has a serious, contemplative appearance. The lover of science and the friend of humanity will not pass this record of a truly good man, without recalling to recollection his indefatigable industry, by which the cause of science has been accelerated; and his no less indefatigable perseverance to obtain the rights of men for those who had been deprived of them by the caprice of tyranny.

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The principal monuments in the Abbey have now been described, and although many of little or no importance have been passed by without remark, yet all that are really curious, either for their antiquity or as works of art, have received a proper share of attention. In concluding the account, we may add, that to contrast the skill of the artists at different periods, the monuments in the chapel of Edward the Confessor should be compared with those in the northern transept, on which spot are erected some of the

finest pieces of sculpture of our age. In the aisles of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, and the chapels adjoining, every variety of monument may be observed; and the visitor will not fail to notice, that while the members of the naval and military professions have their memorials scattered profusely around, the man of science, the artist, and the lover of literature, appear entirely neglected, if we except indeed the monuments in Poet's Corner. And these were erected under very different circumstances to the majority of the others. For the honour of the former, the nation was called upon, "by authority of Parliament," to contribute the sum necessary for the erection of the memorial, but there is no tomb erected under similar circumstances to a philosopher or a poet. This fact is not pleasing when we see so many to the memory of men who otherwise would have been long since forgotten; it is satisfactory, however, to observe, that many of the brightest ornaments of this country, in literature and science, have been honoured with a memorial in this place, the expense of which has been met by public subscription. A plain tablet erected under such circumstances, speaks more eloquently of the merits of the man so honoured, than the most laudatory epitaph. With regard to the epitaphs generally, little notice has been taken of them in the preceding pages, but an examination of them alone will amply repay a visit to the Abbey. The strangest conceits, and the most fulsome flattery, to "soothe the dull cold ear of Death," will be found in profusion, but so will likewise some of the finest specimens of epitaphs ever written. To view the whole Abbey with attention, requires more than a single visit; but even on a cursory examination enough may be found to afford the contemplative mind ample satisfaction.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

## CORONATION CEREMONIES.

Earliest record of the Ceremony—Introductions of Forms—The Anointing—The Ampulla—Description of the Regalia—The Imperial Crown and Crown of State—The Ring—The Queen's Ring—The Orb—The Sceptre.

As the Coronations of the various Sovereigns who have reigned in this country since the conquest have all been celebrated within the walls of Westminster Abbey, it is thought that a short historical account of the ceremony, and a description of the manner in which it is to be performed at the ensuing Coronation of Her Majesty, Victoria, will probably be acceptable to the reader. The subject would have been noticed in the earlier chapters of the work, when giving the history of the Abbey, but from the importance of the ceremony, and the interest attaching to it at the present time, it was considered advisable to devote a separate portion of the book to an account of it alone. In order to render this as interesting as possible, many curious facts relating both to the antiquity of the ceremony, and to its celebration at different periods in this country, have been collected; and these, it is hoped, will give the reader an insight into the manners of the people at the periods described; and, at the same time, prevent the subject having that antiquarian dryness that is sometimes found in such descriptions.

Before proceeding to state the manner in which the ceremony is performed in the present day, it will be interesting to trace the origin of many of the forms, and see how gradually the ceremonial has lost its original simplicity, and accumulated symbols, oaths, and solemn declarations, that were formerly quite unknown; and which, whether they add to the general effect, or detract from it, might, certainly, in many instances, be discontinued.

The first Coronation of which we have any record, is



that of Saul; but the fact that the Israelites expressed their wishes to Samuel by saying, "Now make us a king to judge us *like all the nations*," proves that the custom must have existed a long time previously. It is indeed only natural to suppose, that a tribe of half-civilized men would choose one who was celebrated for his prowess as a warrior, or his skill as a hunter, to be their chief to lead them out to war, and decide any disputes that might arise amongst them. Some such circumstances as these evidently determined the election of a chief or king, since he was always chosen from amongst his people. Samuel said to the Israelites, "See ye whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people. And the people shouted, and said, God save the King." The acceptance of a Sovereign by the subjects over whom he is to reign, has always been considered so important, that even where the crown is hereditary, as in our own country, "the recognition" is still preserved, and forms one of the most impressive portions of the Coronation Ceremony. The form was originally exceedingly simple; but as a solemn contract between a king and his people, must always have been impressive. From the very earliest periods it has been a religious ceremony; the king binding himself by the most sacred obligations, to rule according to the laws, and for the benefit of all his subjects.

It may easily be imagined, that in order to increase the grandeur of so important a ceremonial, many forms not actually essential would soon be introduced. Of these the crowning and anointing appear to be the most ancient, as they are at the present time the most important. The earlier kings of Israel were anointed and crowned. The former ceremony was used when David was appointed king; but there is no mention of a crown till Jehoshaphat's coronation. "Jehoiada brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon his head, and gave him the testimony, and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands and said, 'God save the King.'"

Next to the election, or "recognition" of a king, the ceremony of anointing appears to be the most ancient. It

is a religious ceremony frequently mentioned in Scripture, and has always been preserved at the coronation of Christian sovereigns. It was introduced into the form of electing the Emperors of the Eastern or Byzantine Empire in the thirteenth century, in order to deprive the soldiers of their right of bestowing the crown. As the anointing with holy oil could only be performed by the Pope or an Ecclesiastic, the Pope thus obtained all the power that had formerly belonged to the soldiers and people. To add an additional sanctity to the ceremony, the oil was consecrated; and even in some cases, was asserted to possess a superior degree of sanctity. The holy oil used in anointing the French kings, is reported to be that which was brought from heaven by a dove at the coronation of King Clovis, about the end of the fifth century. And it is said, that although it has always been used at the inauguration of the French sovereigns, that it remains undiminished! At the coronation of Charles X., the priests reported that they had obtained a little of it, which had been saved during the first revolution. A legend of similar impudence was invented respecting the holy oil with which the usurper Henry IV. was anointed. It was said that while Thomas à Becket, the imperious and insolent Archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry II., was in exile abroad, the blessed Virgin presented him with a small quantity of sacred oil, and at the same time assured him that whoever was anointed with it, would become great kings and holy patrons of the church. Notwithstanding the sanctity of this oil, it appears that Thomas à Becket took so little care of it that it was lost. At last, however, the place where it was to be found was revealed in a miraculous manner to a pilgrim; who having obtained it, presented it to the Duke of Lancaster, then on the Continent engaged in the wars. He gave it to Edward the Black Prince, who ordered it to be safely deposited as a relic of peculiar sanctity in the Tower of London. At the coronation of Richard II., however, it could not be found, and it is said, many persons believed that it was the decree of Providence that it should not be used for his coronation, in order to prevent him becoming

the exalted character that was promised to whoever should be anointed with it. At a subsequent period the oil was again found, and Richard wished to be crowned a second time, in order to have the benefit of the anointing. This, however, the pope would not permit, so the poor king was obliged to remain satisfied with the belief, that some more fortunate monarch was to reap the advantages he was denied. Shortly afterwards Richard was deposed, and Henry IV., who succeeded him, had the oil used at his coronation. It is exceedingly probable, that the lie just described was invented in order to impress the people with the belief, that the usurper was chosen by Heaven to reign over this nation; a task of no great difficulty considering the state of the public mind, and the idolatrous reverence paid to any relics the clergy chose to call sacred.

The AMPULLA, or Golden Eagle, in which the oil is contained at coronations in the present day, is said to be the vessel that contained the relic above described. It is of pure gold, nearly seven inches in height, and weighs about ten ounces. It escaped the fate of the other portions of the regalia in the time of the Commonwealth, when they were all sold and destroyed.

The sanctity supposed to be bestowed on a king by the ceremony of anointing, has been regarded with the greatest veneration from the time of Saul to a comparatively modern period. David is represented as sparing Saul on more than one occasion, because he was an anointed king. "Who can stretch forth his hand against Jehovah's anointed and be guiltless?" is the expression he uses when declining to avail himself of the opportunity of killing his enemy. And in our country an anointed king has been permitted to perpetrate outrages that would not have been tolerated in one who had not undergone the ceremony. Shakspeare says,

"Not all the water in the rude rough sea,  
Can wash the balm from an *anointed* king."

The parts anointed at the last coronation were the hands, breast, and head: at the ceremony about to take place, the



form of the cross will be made by the Archbishop with the holy oil on the hands and head only of Her Majesty. Anointing on the head appears to have been the earliest practice ; but formerly the shoulders and bowings of both arms were touched with the oil ; and as this has been discontinued, a president is afforded for any further alteration.

The CROWN first used appears to have been simply a circlet of leaves or metal. A circle or ring has always been regarded as a solemn token : it is emblematical of the completeness or perfection of a solemn right ; and well adapted, therefore, both for coronation purposes, in which the sovereign is supposed to wed himself to the nation, as also for the marriage ceremony of which it forms so important a part. In the Roman and Grecian games, the victor was decorated with a laurel wreath as an honourable mark of his skill and prowess ; and in appointing governors of provinces, and vassal princes, a similar mark of distinction was conferred. The kings of the Saxon race in England had a crown like that of other nations, which at that time was only a plain fillet. King Egbert first adopted the circle or fillet with points, ornaments which had long previously decorated the crowns of the Eastern monarchs. Edmund Ironside increased the decorations by adding pearls to the tips of the points. William the Conqueror had the circle adorned with flowerets and leaves, and was the first sovereign who introduced the cross into any portion of the regalia. The crown of William Rufus resembled, as nearly as possible, that of Edmund Ironside. At a subsequent period, when the kings of this country began to lay claim to the throne of France, and to assert their right by frequent invasions of that country, the *fluer-de-lis* was introduced as an ornament to the English crown, where it has remained even to the present day ; what was formerly emblematical, having, by lapse of time, become simply ornamental. From the time of Henry I. to Edward III., the decorations of the crown underwent but little alteration : the latter monarch enriched his crown with *fluer-de-lis* and crosses pattée, and arched with four bars. Thus it remained till the reign of Henry VII., when

two arches adorned with pearls were first added, and this form has been continued to the present time. During the Commonwealth, the crown called "St. Edward's," said to have been worn by that monarch, and which was formerly kept in the Abbey, was sold with the other portions of the regalia by order of Parliament.

For the coronation of Charles II., a new crown was made as near like St. Edward's as possible: this is now the Imperial Crown, and is that with which the sovereigns of this country are crowned. It is adorned with a great number of diamonds and other precious stones; and formerly when a coronation took place, it was further enriched by the gems which usually ornament the Crown of State, or that worn by the sovereign at the Coronation banquet in Westminster Hall, or when he went in state to open or dissolve Parliament. At the time of the coronation, the jewels were taken from the latter Crown, and being fixed in collets, were inserted in the Imperial Crown. On the accession of a new sovereign, the Crown of State is re-decorated and altered. George IV. had the regalia altered and beautified so considerably, that the expense amounted to nearly sixty thousand pounds. The jewels are now permanently fixed in it.

The IMPERIAL CROWN is described as being rather more than a foot in height. Round the bottom part is a circle of ermine, which is surmounted by a band of pure gold, in which are set a gorgeous number of diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, encircled below by a fillet of beautiful pearls. The arches, or circular bars, which meet at the top in the form of a cross, are likewise of the finest gold. On the edges are sparkling rows of diamonds, and in the centre of the bars there are a number of other precious stones of immense value. At the points where the bars are fastened to the circle of gold, four Maltese crosses formed of brilliants are fixed; and in the spaces between them there are four *fleur-de-lis*, composed of gold and diamonds. On the top is placed an orb of gold and precious stones, from which arises a cross of the same material, garnished with superb brilliants. Three pearls of great size hang pendant from its extremities, and by their contrast

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with the diamonds, add an additional lustre to the appearance of the latter. On the Maltese cross in front of the crown is a sapphire, of the deepest azure, more than two inches in length, and one in breadth; and on the cross at the back of the crown is the ancient ruby which was worn by the Black Prince at the battle of Cressy, and at Agincourt by Henry V. It is the finest in the world, and is estimated of the value of 10,000*l*. The cap within the crown is composed of the richest purple velvet, lined with white taffeta.

The CROWN OF STATE is exceedingly rich in all kinds of precious stones. The extraordinary ruby just described is kept in it, except at the time of the coronation; and the orb from which the cross at the top arises, is remarkable from being one entire stone of a sea-green colour, known by the name of an aquamarine. The form of this Crown is nearly the same as the Imperial Crown, but can be altered at the wish of the sovereign. It is to be re-decorated for her present Majesty, and will be made smaller in the circlet.

The Imperial Crown is only used for the coronation of the kings and queens of this country. When a queen consort is crowned, another called “Queen Edgitha’s Crown” is used, which was originally made for the queen of Charles II. And in proceeding to and from the coronation, and on other great state occasions, the queen consort wears a crown of state very nearly resembling the king’s, except that the jewels are not so rich and numerous. The value of the regalia is immense; and the expense of merely preparing the crown for the ceremony of the coronation, has often been considered too extravagant. At the time of the Commonwealth, the Parliament voted that the whole of the regalia was unnecessary, and the expense a useless and burdensome tax upon the nation. The whole were accordingly sold, and the following is preserved in the Court Rolls as the proceeds of the sale:—“For King Alfred’s crown, of gould wirework, sett with slight stones, and two little bells, 79½ ounces, at 3*l*. per ounces, 248*l*. 10*s*. The Imperial Crown, of massey gould, weighing 7 pounds

6 ounces, valued at 338*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* Queen Edith's crowne, formerly thought to be of massey gould, but upon triall found to be of silver gilt, enriched with garnettes, foule pearle, sapphires, and some odd stones, 50½ ounces, valued at 16*l.*" The money raised by the sale of the regalia, was applied to national purposes by the Parliament.

Besides the anointing and crowning, another form of great antiquity constitutes a part of the Coronation ceremony, namely, the investiture by *the Ring*. In the Scriptures, as well as in the early history of all nations, we find that power was delegated by means of a ring, the signet on which was frequently the sign of authority by which the sovereign's mandates were enforced. When Richard II. resigned the crown in favour of the Duke of Lancaster, afterwards Henry the Fourth, he did so by presenting him with his ring. The Coronation Ring, or as it has been called, "the Wedding-ring of England," is of pure gold, with a large violet ruby set in it, on which is the form of the cross. The original Coronation ring was reported to have been sent to Edward the Confessor by St. John the Evangelist. The legend states, that St. Edward, who was a very charitable man, meeting on one occasion a poor pilgrim, and having no money to bestow upon him, presented him with his ring. Subsequently two English pilgrims, who were travelling in Palestine, separated from their company and lost their way. When they were considering what they had better do, "there came to them a fayre ancient man, with wyte hair for age. Thenne the olde man axed him what they were, and of what regyon, and they answered that they were pylgrims of England, and hadde lost their felleship and way also. Thenne this olde man comforted them goodly, and brought them into a fair cytee; and whanne they had well refreshed them, and rested there all nyhte, on the morne, this fayre olde man went with them and brought them in the right waye agayne. And he was glad to hear them talke of the welfare and holynesse of their kynge Saint Edward. And when he should depart from them, thenne he tolde them what he was, and sayd, 'I am Johan the Evangelist, and sayd ye unto Ed-



ward your king, that I grete him well by the token that he gaff to me, this ryng, with his one handes.'” This story is recorded on the screen in St. Edward’s chapel, where the king is represented presenting the ring to the Evangelist in the disguise of a pilgrim.

The present coronation ring is said to have once belonged to the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots, by whom it was presented to James I. On the execution of Charles I. it was preserved by a friend of the king’s, and conveyed to Charles II. After his death it came into the possession of James II., who, when he abdicated the throne, took away this ring with him concealed in his drawers. On attempting to escape from Sheerness, he was discovered by the captain of the vessel he had chosen to convey him away, and the sailors with great rudeness searched his person. They did not, however, discover the ring, which he accordingly took with him, and subsequently it came into the possession of George the Third. The *Queen’s ring* is formed of gold, round which are placed a number of small-pointed rubies, with a large one on the top. It is of a very antique shape.

In addition to the ceremonies just described, which have formed a part of the coronation service from the earliest periods, various other forms have been subsequently introduced, in order to add to the grandeur of the solemnity, and preserve the remembrance of duties to be enforced or performed by the sovereign. Those which relate in particular to the monarch of this country will be mentioned when we describe the Coronation ceremony; but some of the insignia employed is of a very early date, and must be mentioned previously.

The ORB, or globe, has been an emblem of supreme power in all ages. It was used as such at the inauguration of the Roman emperors. The first Christian emperor added a cross to it, “which showed,” says an old author, “that by faith in the cross he was emperor of the earth; for the globe denotes the earth, which is of like form, and the cross denotes faith, because God in the flesh was nailed to it.” The orb at the coronation is only placed in

the hand of the reigning monarch ; the sovereign's consort is never invested with this mark of authority. When William and Mary were crowned, as they both reigned in their own right, a second orb was made, which is now preserved along with the other regalia. The one used is a ball of gold, about six inches in diameter, with a band passing around it one way, and over half its circumference the other. The bands are adorned with a great number of diamonds and other precious stones, and on the top is placed an amethyst of an oval figure and very large size. Above this is a cross of gold, set with diamonds, in the centre of which, on one side, is a sapphire, and on the other an emerald. It is also embellished with four large pearls, in the angles of the cross, and three large pearls at each end.

THE SCEPTRE is a more ancient symbol of sovereignty than the crown in this country, and is mentioned in the Bible as an emblem of supreme power. Among our regalia there are two, one having a dove, and the other a cross, placed on the top. The first is of gold, richly adorned with diamonds and other precious stones ; and the one with the dove is also of gold. It is curiously embossed, and round the handle and upper part of it are placed a number of very beautiful rubies, sapphires, emeralds, and diamonds. The globe which supports the cross is placed in some very beautiful worked leaves.

The symbols and ceremonies just described all had their origin at very early periods, and from their antiquity and impressiveness, form a most interesting portion of the ceremonial. In the English service, however, in addition to these, various other forms are introduced ; the sovereign is sworn to defend the rights and liberties of the people ; and the most important amongst them in return, promise to render and enforce obedience to his commands, and to serve him faithfully as loyal subjects. The manner in which all this is performed will be described in the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER XV.

Fitting up of the Abbey for the Coronation—The Ceremony—The Recognition—The Oblations—The Coronation Oath—The Anointing—The Investing—The Crowning, and the Homage of the Peers.

SUNDAY was the day usually chosen in former times for the performance of the coronation ceremony, because it was probably supposed to impart an additional degree of sanctity to the proceedings; and the place in which they occurred was invariably Westminster Abbey. All our sovereigns have been crowned there since the Conquest, as previously mentioned, and on such occasions the Abbey was fitted up with an extraordinary degree of splendour. The arrangements now made, however, to accommodate the company who are present, from duty or curiosity, can never have been surpassed. To afford the reader an idea of the splendid appearance presented by the sacred edifice when fitted up for the coronation, we have condensed from the official documents published at the time, the following account of the arrangements when William the Fourth and his consort were crowned. The same plan is adhered to as nearly as possible at every repetition of the ceremony.

At the western entrance a temporary porch was erected. It was constructed of wood, but coloured so as to resemble the stone building as nearly as possible. From this doorway to the entrance of the choir, were erected galleries decorated with crimson cloth, of which the front parts were in a line with the pillars of the centre aisle, and the back parts rested on the walls of the Abbey itself. Along the main building a platform was erected, upon which the procession was to walk; it was matted over, and covered in the centre with purple cloth. On each side of it were stationed two companies of the Grenadier Guard.

A beautiful Gothic Screen, forming the entrance to the choir, and enclosing the organ and organ loft, was set



apart for the accommodation of the band. It was painted by Mr. Parris, the painter of the Colosseum, and although only constructed of wood, was made to imitate very closely the appearance of stone, harmonizing finely with the other portions of the building. At the entrance of the choir the floor was raised several steps, and the spectacle here presented was magnificent. All the stalls, pews, and reading desks were removed. Four or five rows of benches were erected in their stead, and were set apart for the reception of the Knights of the Bath, Privy Counsellors, judges, and others who took a part in the procession. On each side of the choir were built two rows of galleries, which reached to the intersection of the transept with the choir. The vaultings above these galleries were also fitted up as places for spectators, and handsomely decorated with crimson cloth. At the further end of the Choir some steps led to the "theatre," or raised platform, on which the ceremony takes place. It was situated exactly in the middle of the Abbey, between the two transepts. It was covered to the base of the first step with cloth of gold, and thence to the flooring with rich Wilton carpet. St. Edward's chair, containing the fatal stone which has been previously described, was placed on it, and it was in this chair thus situated, that the king received the homage of the peers.

The north and south transepts were fitted up with rows of benches, and close to each window an extensive gallery was erected, to which persons were admitted who purchased tickets of the Dean and Chapter. The first ten rows of benches on each side were kept for the peers and peeresses, the peers sitting on the right, and the peeresses on the left of the chair of state. Above these rows were others reserved for the reception of the friends and relations of the nobility. On each side of the transepts were large galleries, erected with great elegance.

The Sacrarium, or Area, exceeded all the other preparations in magnificence of decoration. The first object that attracted the eye was the altar. The table was six feet nine inches in length, and stood upon a platform a little

above the elevation of the floor, and had a small shelf behind. The whole was covered with blue and gold brocade. The top of this covering was panelled with gold broad lace, and was edged with gold looped fringe. The bottom and sides were bordered with gold lace, and the whole was furnished with a deep gold fringe seven inches deep. On this were subsequently placed the articles necessary in the Coronation.

The back of the altar was covered with blue and gold brocade. This drapery was coiled up with ropes of gold. It was surmounted by a cornice composed of two-inch-and-a-half gold and silk rope, with large gilt rosettes to each pipe. The fringe was of gold and silk four inches deep.

On the left hand, or north side of the altar, stood the chair of the Archbishop of Canterbury; it was of oak. The back seat and elbows were stuffed and covered with velvet of the colour called bishops' purple, and were panelled with gold lace. There was a footstool to match, which was covered with purple velvet, and ornamented with gyp. Besides this, there was a kneeling cushion for the archbishop, covered with purple velvet, with four gold tassels, and a similar cushion for the dean on the other side. The step leading to the altar and the floor of the sacrarium, were covered with a rich garter-blue and gold Wilton carpet. The pattern was a Norman rose, with the ermine. On the right of the altar stood the offering table, which was covered with blue Genoa velvet, bordered with lace and fringed with gold. Upon this, preparatory to the ceremonies, was placed a cushion, upon which the offerings were to be made, covered with garter-blue velvet, panelled with gold lace, and with four gold tassels at the corners. On the south side of the sacrarium was the box provided for the female branches of the Royal Family, and also for the young princes. On the north side was placed a bench for the bishops, who were to assist in the ceremonies. There were also in the sacrarium a chair of recognition, and a litany chair for each of their majesties. St. Edward's chair stood on the south side of the area in front of the altar.

At the back of the altar, on the south side, was the en-

try to the Traverse, in which their Majesties retired to alter their robes at the conclusion of the ceremony. St. Edward's Chapel is always appropriated to this purpose. The entrances were concealed by green and gold tapestry hangings, corresponding with the adjoining gallery fronts.

Above was the gallery erected for the members of the House of Commons. The benches ascended one above another almost to a level with the upper windows. The seats were entirely filled, and the greater portion of the members appeared in various uniforms, those who were not so dressed wore court dresses. The Speaker occupied a plain oak chair in the centre closely over the altar, and before him lay his mace on a purple cushion.

At the extreme eastern end of the Abbey, above this gallery, a small one was erected, to enable the King's trumpeters to give notice of his Majesty's entry into, and exit from the Abbey, and also to assist occasionally in different parts of the ceremony.

The sittings provided for the public who purchased tickets of the officers of the Abbey, were nearly empty; the sums asked for sittings were enormous. Five guineas were required for a seat in the galleries at the sides of the nave, where no part of the ceremony could be seen, and only a partial glance obtained of the procession as it passed to and from the choir. The seats in the Abbey were arranged to accommodate rather more than 5000 persons, and it is probable that at the ensuing coronation they will be better filled.

The procession arrived at the Abbey in the State Carriages, and their Majesties having dismounted, entered by the western doors, and proceeded down the nave into the choir. The same order will be observed at the present coronation, and after the sovereign has taken her seat for a few minutes, the ceremony will commence with the Archbishop of Canterbury presenting her to the people as their rightful queen. This is termed

#### THE RECOGNITION.

The Archbishop advancing to the east end of the plat-



form on which the throne is placed, addresses the people as follows :—

“Sirs, I here present unto you VICTORIA, the rightful inheritor of the crown of this realm; wherefore all ye that are come this day to do your homage, service, and bounden duty, are ye willing to do the same?”

These words are repeated at the west, south, and north sides of the platform, and at each repetition the people respond with loud huzzas. At the conclusion the trumpets are sounded, and the drums beat, and the Sovereign, who has risen from her seat to be presented, sits down while the choir sing an anthem. This portion of the ceremony is evidently a remaining vestige of the ancient form of electing the Sovereign. The words of the recognition have been altered at different periods, but on all occasions the people have been asked for their consent that the monarch should be crowned. During the time the feudal tenures prevailed, it was customary to present the chief to his principal vassals, who recognised him as the rightful heir; and some have thought that the recognition is a remaining vestige of the custom; but the present form does not owe its origin to any such feudal ceremony, because the vassals were never asked if they would render service to their Lord, but were commanded to do so, and had no power to resist. The Pope first abolished the form of words, asking the people if they *chose* their king to reign over them, at the time the church claimed the right to dispose of the crown of all Christian countries. It was thought proper, however, to retain “the recognition” in a modified form.

After the anthem has concluded, the monarch offers

#### THE OBLATIONS.

Advancing to the altar the Sovereign kneels down, and reverently presents a rich pall or covering of cloth of gold to the archbishop, to be placed on the altar. The second offering is a pound of pure gold, which is laid upon the pall. The archbishop then offers up a prayer beseeching the Almighty to graciously receive these oblations in humble acknowledgment of his sovereignty over all. After the

prayer is concluded, the regalia is placed by the side of the ingot of gold on the altar, and the Sovereign retires to her chair of state, while the proper service for the day is being read. After this the communion service is celebrated, and a sermon preached, at the conclusion of which the archbishop administers

#### THE CORONATION OATH.

Previous to the oath being taken, it was formerly the custom for the monarch to sign the declaration against popery; but this is now omitted from the ceremony, it having been signed by the Queen on her accession. The oath is administered in the following form:—the archbishop addressing her Majesty, says,

Madam, are you willing to take the oath usually taken by your predecessors?

*Queen.* I am willing.

*Archbishop.* Will you solemnly promise and swear to govern the people of this United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and the dominions thereunto belonging, according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on, and the respective laws and customs of the same?

*Queen.* I solemnly promise so to do.

*Archbishop.* Will you, to your power, cause law in justice and mercy to be executed in all your judgments?

*Queen.* I will.

*Archbishop.* Will you, to the utmost of your power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law? And will you maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, as by law established, within the kingdoms of England and Ireland, the dominion of Wales, and the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and the territories thereunto belonging before the union of the two kingdoms (of England and Scotland)? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of England and Ireland, and to the churches there committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as do or shall appertain unto them or any of them?

*Queen.* All this I promise to do.

The Queen then goes to the altar, and kneeling down, lays both her hands upon the holy Gospels, and takes the following oath:—

“The things which I have herebefore promised, I will perform and keep, so help me God.”

The Sovereign then kisses the Gospels, and signs the oath.

This oath is generally regarded as the most important part of the ceremony. It was the one established by Act of Parliament immediately after the revolution, and has undergone no alteration since, except a verbal amendment introduced at the time of the union of Scotland with England. In all Christian countries, the sovereign is sworn at the time of his coronation, in particular to protect the right and interest of the clergy and the church. It is indeed but natural that those who have had the framing, and who have the administering of the oath, should take care that their privileges are not encroached upon; but in some cases they have attempted to obtain, in this manner, the sanction of the sovereign to acts that are universally regarded in the present day as iniquitous and tyrannical. Thus, in the coronation oath of the kings of France, the following sentence is introduced:—

“I will endeavour to the utmost of my power, and with good faith, to exterminate all heretics, marked by the church, from my land, and the jurisdiction subject to me. And I confirm the aforesaid promise by oath.”

The coronation oath of Napoleon is remarkable, as a contrast to the above, for its extreme liberality, and absence of unmeaning and unnecessary words. It was administered as follows:—

“I swear to maintain the integrity of the territory of the Republic; to respect, and cause to be respected, equality of rights, political and civil liberty, and the inviolability of the sales of national property; never to levy any impost, or establish any tax, but by virtue of the law, to maintain the institution of the Legion of honour, and to govern solely with a view to the interests, the happiness, and the glory of the French people.”

#### THE ANOINTING.

After the coronation oath has been administered, the external portions of the Sovereign's dress are removed, and she is conducted to St. Edward's chair. Upon being seated,



a canopy is raised above her head, supported by four Knights of the Garter, and the archbishop then performs the ceremony of anointing. The dean of Westminster pours a little of the holy oil from the ampulla into the spoon, and the archbishop dips his fingers in the oil, and anoints her on the head and hands. The parts anointed, are afterwards dried with wool.

#### THE INVESTING.

In the order for the coronation ceremony it is directed that after the anointing, the Sovereign shall be invested with the Supertunica, girdle, buskins, sandals, spurs and sword. As however portions of this ceremony have been omitted at different coronations at the request of the sovereign, a similar president will be followed at the ensuing celebration of the ceremony. Subsequently the sovereign is invested with the Armial or *Stole*, and the *imperial mantle* which is exceedingly rich, being formed of gold and purple brocade tissue with large flowers of gold, which are edged round with deep mazarine blue. The mantle is an ecclesiastical vestment, and is placed on the Sovereign as a sign that she is invested with a sacred as well as a political character. The emblem of majesty *the Orb* is afterwards, placed on the Sovereign's right hand, and *the Ring* previously described, is put upon the fourth finger of the same hand by the Archbishop.

#### THE CROWNING.

The ceremonies just described add little to the effect of the scene, and might well be omitted in order to shorten the unnecessarily extended forms. After they have been performed, however, the most imposing ceremony of the day takes place, viz., the crowning. The monarch being seated in St. Edward's chair, the Archbishop takes the crown in his hands, and having repeated a short prayer carries it from the altar, and reverently places it on the head of the Sovereign. The moment this is done the trumpets sound, the drums beat, the people huzza, and the guns in St. James Park, and the Tower, fire a royal salute ; a man

having been stationed on the top of the Abbey to give a signal the instant the crowning took place. At the same time the peer and the peeresses put on their Coronets, and the Queen's treasurer throws among the company in the Abbey quantities of gold and silver coins. Subsequently the monarch is presented with the Sceptre, rod, and Bible, after which she is conducted to the throne on the raised platform to receive

#### THE HOMAGE.

This is the remains of a feudal custom by which the vassal promised to perform all the rights and services due from him to his superior. The manner in which it is performed at the coronation is as follows:—the Sovereign being seated, the Archbishops and the Bishops reverently approach, and repeat the following words, kneeling, “I, ———, will be faithful and true, and true faith will bear unto you, our Sovereign Lady, and your heirs, monarchs of Great Britain; and I will do and truly acknowledge the service of the Lands which I claim to hold of you in right of the Church, so help me God!” The Archbishop and the Bishops after him then rise and kiss the Sovereign's hand. The peers perform their fealty in the following manner. The premier Duke present at the coronation, who in this instance will be the Duke of Sussex, advancing to where the Queen sits, proclaims aloud on his bended knee; “I, Augustus, Frederick Duke of Sussex, do become your liege man of life and limb, and of earthly worship; and faith and troth shall bear unto you, to live and die with you against all manner of folk, so help me God!” The premier peers of the different orders of nobility repeat the same form of words, which are likewise responded by each of the peers in succession. Then advancing to the Sovereign they touch the crown with their right hand, to show that they are its supporters, and kiss Her Majesty's hand. The custom of kissing the Sovereign's left cheek is to be dispensed with at the present Coronation.

After the nobility have performed their Homage, an anthem is sung by the choir, and the Sovereign then

receives the sacrament. In the course of the communion service the Queen makes a second oblation of an ingot of gold, and after the service has finished the Archbishop pronounces a benediction on Her Majesty and the people assembled, and this brings the ceremony of the coronation to a conclusion. The Queen will then retire and change her robes, and afterwards proceed from the Abbey in the same state as she arrived at it.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

Magnificence of Ancient Coronations.—Henry the Third's Queen.  
The office of Champion.—The form of giving the Challenge at the Coronation Feast.

THE Coronation of a Sovereign has always been the occasion at which the nobility of England have displayed their wealth and power, with a profusion and magnificence that could only be exhibited by the higher class of a rich and powerful country. In former times the wealthy of the land vied with each other on such occasions, in having the largest retinue and the most expensive decorations, and to such an extent was this carried, that we need not wonder at sumptuary laws being passed to repress extravagance. Noblemen frequently spent the greater portion of their incomes in a single feast, and we may readily suppose that if they would do this on ordinary occasions, they would be still more profuse at a national ceremony, when the eyes of the whole country were upon them, and when to be thought mean would be the greatest disgrace that could attach itself to the character of a nobleman. It is probable, therefore, that the coronation ceremonies of former times far exceeded those of the present day in magnificence, and the people enjoyed no small portion of the feasting and amusements that ensued.

On the occasion of Eleanor, the Queen of Henry the Third, being crowned, on the 22nd of January, 1236, the king caused six thousand poor men, women, and children,



to be entertained in Westminster Hall, and the rooms of the palace. Stowe says,—

“The citizens rode to meet the king and queen, being clothed in long garments embroidered about with golde and silke of divers coloures, their horses finely trapped in array to the number of three hundred and sixty, every man bearing golden or silver cups in their hands, and the king’s trumpeters before them sounding. The citie was adorned with silkes, and in the night with lamps, cressetts, and other lights, without number, besides many pageants and strange devices which were shown. To this coronation resorted so great a number of all estates, that the citie of London was scarce able to receive them. The archbishop of Canterbury did exercise the office of coronation; the citizens of Winchester took charge of the kitchen, and other citizens attended their charges.”

When any foreign princes honoured the ceremony by their presence, they greatly increased the general joy on the occasion by a bountiful distribution of their wealth amongst the people. Thus, when at the coronation of Edward I., the King of Scotland attended, “He was accompanied,” says an old writer, “by one hundred knights, on horseback, who, as soon as they had dismounted, turned their steeds loose for anyone to catch and keep that thought proper. Then came Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, the King’s Nephew, the Earls of Gloucester, Pembroke, and Warenne, each having in their company a hundred illustrious Knights, wearing their Lord’s armour; and when they had alighted from their palfreys, they also set them free, that whoever chose might take them unquestioned. And the aqueduct in Cheapside poured forth white wine and red, like rain water, for those who would to drink at pleasure.” Gold and silver were likewise profusely scattered among the populace by the more affluent citizens.

It was formerly the custom for the Monarch to reside in the tower of London for some time previous to the Coronation, and the procession took place from the tower to Westminster, passing through the City. This afforded the inhabitants an opportunity of displaying their loyalty by adorning their houses, erecting triumphal arches, and such like proceedings.

Sometimes on such occasions a tournament was held, at

which the knights of foreign countries were invited to attend. When Henry VIII. was crowned, an event of this kind occurred.

A circumstance that contributed very much to the splendour of a coronation was, that very many of the nobility were obliged to attend and perform some particular service, which was required of them at the time their land and title were originally granted. Of the various services performed, none perhaps are better known than those of the champion. This is the only form of chivalry now appertaining to the ceremony, and on this account it is interesting; although it certainly does appear somewhat farcical that the champion should be allowed to throw down a challenge in the presence of his sovereign, which if any man were to accept it would subject him to fine and imprisonment "until he could find good bail for attempting to disturb the peace of our sovereign lady the Queen." In former times trial by battle was considered to be the most satisfactory mode of settling a quarrel. It was declared by the Pope to be an appeal to the judgment of God himself, and hence it was in frequent use amongst the nobility.

We believe there is no occasion recorded where the challenge of the champion has been accepted, and it was therefore, quite as safe to have it given in favour of a usurper, as of the rightful heir.

The ceremony which the champion performs will be dispensed with at the ensuing coronation, in consequence of there being no feast given in Westminster Hall. It is between the first and second course that the champion enters the hall, attended by his esquires and pages, with a herald to proclaim the challenge, and with the earl marshal of England on his left hand, and the lord high constable on his right; both being on horseback. When they have all arrived at the lower end of the hall, the herald would proclaim the challenge in the following words:—

"If any person, of what degree soever, high or low, shall deny or gainsay our sovereign *Victoria*, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and so forth, *Queen*, and next heir to our Sovereign *William the Fourth* de-

ceased, to be the right heir to the imperial crown of this realm of Great Britain, or that *she* ought not to enjoy the same, here is *her* champion, who saith that he lieth, and is a false traitor, being ready in person to combat with him; and in this quarrel will adventure his life against him, on what day soever shall be appointed."

This is proclaimed at the centre and other end of the hall, and after each repetition the champion throws down his gauntlet in token of defiance; which no one picking up, after a pause, the herald performs that office. Then the Sovereign orders a gold cup to be filled with wine, which having tasted, is presented to the champion, who makes a low obeisance to the Sovereign, and having drunk a portion of the wine, retires with the cup in his hand, which he retains as his fee. He is also entitled to one of the Sovereign's great coursers, with a saddle, harness, and trappings of cloth of gold; and one of the best suits of armour, with cases of cloth of gold, and all such other things appertaining to the Sovereign's body as the Sovereign ought to have if personally going into mortal battle.

The general rejoicings at the celebration of the ceremony in the present day, depend very much, as they must ever do and ever have done, on the provision made for the amusement and gratification of the public; and although there are no "conduits running with wine," or "sumptuous feasts for the people," they have provided for them many amusements of different kinds. The theatres are opened gratuitously; fire-works are let off in Hyde Park; and many whose wealth will permit them, take advantage of the opportunity to increase the happiness of their dependants, and humble neighbours. Although, therefore, the coronation may have lost much of its ancient splendour and some of its old English hospitality, there is still sufficient to make it a pleasing as well as an important ceremony, and one which the great body of the people would be sorry to see discontinued.

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN!!!



# CORONATION

OF

## QUEEN VICTORIA.

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As a sequel to the Coronation ceremonies which have just been described, the following brief account of the principal events attending the late performance of the ceremonies may be interesting, both as a short summary of the proceedings that have just taken place, and also to refer to at a future period.

The day appointed for the coronation of the Queen was Thursday, June 28, 1838 ; and for many weeks previously active preparations were made in the metropolis, for the accommodation of the public to view the procession, and to celebrate the occasion with all possible splendour. It had been decided by Government that the ceremony should be conducted as nearly as possible on the same plan as that of his late Majesty, and that the Queen and nobility forming the procession should proceed in carriages from Buckingham Palace to Westminster Abbey, and not on foot, from Westminster Hall, as at the coronation of Geo. IV. It was likewise determined that there should be no banquet in the Hall. It was anticipated by many persons that this curtailment of the splendour formerly observed was derogatory to the wealth and influence of the British nation ; but so many kinds of amusement had been provided for the people, and they entered so heartily into the spirit of the occasion, that no one appeared to think the proceedings could have been conducted more satisfactorily.

The procession left Buckingham Palace at a few minutes past ten o'clock in the morning, in the following order :—

MR. Lee, the High Constable of the City of Westminster.  
A Squadron of Life Guards.

Under the direction of one of the Queen's Equerries, with two Assistants :—  
Carriages of the Foreign Resident Ambassadors and Ministers, in the order in which they take precedence in this country.

The Chargé d'Affaires of Mexico.

The Chargé d'Affaires of Portugal.

The Chargé d'Affaires of Sweden.

The Saxon Minister.

The Hanoverian Minister.

The Greek Minister.

The Sardinian Minister.

The Spanish Minister.

The Minister from the United States.

The Minister from the Netherlands.

The Brazilian Minister.

The Bavarian Minister.

The Danish Minister.

The Belgian Minister.

The Wurtemberg Minister.

The Prussian Minister.

Carriages of the Foreign Ambassadors and Ministers Extraordinary, in the order in which they respectively report their arrival in this country.

Ahmed Fethij Pasha, Ambassador Extraordinary from the Sultan.

Marshal Soult, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of the French.

Duke de Palmella, Ambassador Extraordinary from the Queen of Portugal.

Count Lowenhjelm, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of Sweden.

Marquis de Brignole, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of Sardinia.

Count Alten, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of Hanover.

Prince de Putbus, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of Prussia.

Marquis de Miraflores, Ambassador Extraordinary from the Queen of Spain.

Baron de Capellen, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of the Netherlands.

Prince Schwarzenburg, Ambassador Extraordinary from the Emperor of Austria.

Count Strogonoff, Ambassador Extraordinary from the Emperor of Russia.

Prince de Ligne, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of the Belgians.

Count Ludolf, Ambassador Extraordinary from the King of the Two Sicilies.

The Turkish Ambassador.

The French Ambassador

The Russian Ambassador.

The Austrian Ambassador.

Mounted Band of a Regiment of Household Brigade.

Detachment of Life Guards.

Under the direction of one of Her Majesty's Equerries, with two Assistants :—

Carriages of the Branches of the Royal Family, with their respective Escorts.

The Duchess of Kent and Attendants,

In Her Royal Highness's two Carriages, each drawn by six horses ; with her proper Escort of Life Guards.

The Duchess of Gloucester and Attendants,  
In her Royal Highness's two Carriages, each drawn by six horses; with her proper  
Escort of Life Guards.

Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Attendants,  
In his Royal Highness's two Carriages, each drawn by six horses; with his proper  
Escort of Life Guards.

The Duke of Sussex and Attendants,  
In his Royal Highness's Carriage, drawn by six horses; with his proper Escort of  
Life Guards.

Mounted Band of a Regiment of the household Brigade.

Under the direction of one of the Queen's Equerries, with two Assistants :—

The Queen's Bargemaster.

The Queen's Forty-eight Watermen.

## HER MAJESTY'S CARRIAGES,

Each drawn by six horses.

Two Grooms walking.	The First Carriage Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Pages of Honour—James Charles M. Covell, Esq., and George Cavendish, Esq.		
Two Gentlemen Ushers—Major Beresford, and Captain Green.		
Two Grooms walking.	The Second Carriage, drawn by Six Bays, Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Pages of Honour—Charles Ellice, Esq., and Lord Kilmarnock		
Two Gentlemen Ushers—Charles Heneage, Esq., and the Hon. F. Byng.		
Two Grooms walking.	The Third Carriage, drawn by Six Bays, Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Bedchamber Women—Ladies Theresa Digby, and Charlotte Copley.		
Two Grooms in Waiting—The Hon. George Keppel, and Henry Rich, Esq.		
Two Grooms walking.	The Fourth Carriage, drawn by Six Bays, Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Bedchamber Women—Ladies Harriet Clive, and Caroline Barrington.		
Two Grooms in Waiting—The Hon. William Cooper, and Sir Frederick Stovin.		
Two Grooms walking.	The Fifth Carriage, drawn by six Bays, Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Maids of Honour—The Honourables Misses Rice, and Murray. Groom of the Robes, Captain Francis Seymour. Clerk Marshal, Hon. Col. Cavendish.		
Two Grooms walking.	The Sixth Carriage, drawn by six Bays, Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Maids of Honour—The Honourables Misses Lister, and Paget. Keeper of Privy Purse, Sir Henry Wheatley. Vice-Chamberlain, Earl of Belfast.		
Two Grooms walking.	The Seventh Carriage, drawn by six Bays, Conveyed	Two Grooms walking.
Two Maids of Honour—The Honourables Misses Cavendish and Cocks. Treasurer of the Household, Earl of Surrey. Controller of the Household, The Right Hon. G. Byng.		



- |   |   |                         |
|---|---|-------------------------|
| Two Grooms<br>walking.  | The Eighth Carriage,<br>drawn by six Bays,<br>Conveyed    | Two Grooms<br>walking.  |
| Two Maids of Honour—The Honourables Misses Dillon, and Pitt.<br>Two Lords in Waiting—Lords Gardner, and Lilford.  |   |                         |
| Two Grooms<br>walking.  | The Ninth Carriage,<br>drawn by six Grays,<br>Conveyed    | Two Grooms.<br>walking. |
| Two Ladies of the Bedchamber—Ladies Portman, and Barham.<br>Two Lords in Waiting——Lord Byron, and Viscount Falkland.  |   |                         |
| Two Grooms<br>walking.  | The Tenth Carriage,<br>drawn by six Bays,<br>Conveyed     | Two Grooms.<br>walking. |
| Two Ladies of the Bedchamber—Lady Lyttleton, and Countess of Mulgrave.<br>Two Lords in Waiting——Viscount Torrington, and Earl of Uxbridge.  |   |                         |
| Two Grooms<br>walking.  | The Eleventh Carriage,<br>drawn by six Bays,<br>Conveyed  | Two Grooms<br>walking.  |
| Two Ladies of the Bedchamber—Countess of Charlemont, Marchioness of Tavistock.<br>Two Lords in Waiting——The Earl of Fingal, and Marquis of Headfort.  |   |                         |
| Two Grooms<br>walking.  | The Twelfth Carriage,<br>drawn by six Blacks,<br>Conveyed | Two Grooms<br>walking.  |
| The Principal Lady of the Bedchamber—The Marchioness of Lansdowne.<br>The Lord Chamberlain, The Marquis Conyngham.<br>The Lord Steward, The Duke of Argyll.   |   |                         |
| A Squadron of Life Guards.  |   |                         |
| Mounted Band of the Household Brigade.  |   |                         |
| Military Staff and Aides-de-camp, on Horseback,<br>Three and Three,   |   |                         |
| Sir R. Gardiner, Colonel Freemantle, Lord G. Russell,<br>Colonel Wynyard, Colonel Fergusson, Colonel Brotherton,<br>Sir A. J. Dalrymple, Sir J. H. Reynett, Colonel Smelt,<br>Colonel Arnold, Colonel Wemyss, Colonel Wood. |   |                         |
| First and Principal Aide-de-Camp to the Queen,<br>Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Taylor, G.C.B.,<br>attended by the Equerry of the Crown Stable, Sir George Quentin.  |   |                         |
| The Queen's Gentleman Rider, J. Fozzard, Esq.   |   |                         |
| Deputy Adjutant-General, Major-General, J. Gardiner.  |   |                         |
| Deputy Quartermaster-General, Colonel Freeth, K.H.  |   |                         |
| Deputy Adjutant-General, Royal Artillery, Sir Alexander Dickson.  |   |                         |
| Quartermaster-General, Sir. J. Willoughby Gordon, Bart.   |   |                         |
| Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, Lord Fitzroy Somerset, K.C.B.   |   |                         |
| Adjutant-General, Sir J. Macdonald, K.C.B.  |   |                         |
| The Royal Huntsmen, Yeomen Prickers, and Forresters.  |   |                         |
| Six of Her Majesty's Horses,<br>with Rich Trappings, each Horse led by two Grooms.  |   |                         |
| The Knight Marshal, Sir J. C. Lamb, Bart.   |   |                         |
| Marshalmen in ranks of Four.  |   |                         |
| The First Exons of the Yeomen of the Guard, on horseback,<br>Sir Thomas Curteis, Knight,  |   |                         |
| The Second Exon, Samuel Hancock, Esq.   |   |                         |

The Third Exon, Captain William Bellairs.

The Fourth Exon, J. Nuttall, Esq.

One hundred Yeomen of the Guard, Four and Four.

The Clerk of the Check, James Bunce Curling, Esq.

Harbinger, Samuel Wilson, Esq.

Ensign Sir Thomas N. Reeve.

Lieutenant Sir Samuel Spry, M.P.

#### THE STATE COACH,

Drawn by Eight Cream-coloured Horses,  
attended by a Yeoman of the Guard at each wheel, and  
two Footmen at each door.

The Gold Stick,                      And the Captain of the Yeoman of the Guard,  
Viscount Combermere,                      the Earl of Ilchester,  
riding on either side, attended by two grooms each,  
Conveying

#### THE QUEEN,

The Mistress of the Robes, the Duchess of Sutherland,

The Master of the Horse, the Earl of Albemarle.

The Captain-General of the Royal Archers, the Duke of Buccleuch,  
Attended by two Grooms.

A Squadron of Life Guards.

Having proceeded up Constitution Hill, along Piccadilly, down St. James's-street, Pall Mall, Charing Cross, and Parliament-street, the procession reached the Abbey at half-past eleven o'clock. About half an hour afterwards the ceremony in the Abbey commenced, and was conducted in the manner we have described in the preceding pages. The only incidents that require notice were the mishaps of some of the peers in performing their homage, and that the crown of state was new for the occasion. It was composed of hoops of silver, inclosing a cap of deep purple, or rather blue velvet. The hoops are completely covered with precious stones, surmounted with a ball, covered with small diamonds, and having a Maltese cross of brilliants on the top of it. The cross has in its centre the splendid sapphire before described. The rim of the crown is clustered with brilliants, and ornamented with *fleur de lis* and Maltese crosses equally rich. In front of the Maltese cross, which is in front of the crown, is the enormous heart-shaped ruby; and beneath this, in the circular rim, is an immense sapphire. There are many other precious stones, emeralds, rubies, and sapphires, and several small clusters of drop pearls. The lower part of the crown is surrounded with ermine. It is, upon the whole, a most dazzling and splendid crown, and does infinite credit to those by whom it has been designed and put together. Its weight is about three pounds.

The Coronation ceremony was performed by the Archbishop

of Canterbury, and the sermon was preached by the Bishop of London. The service lasted four hours, and at its conclusion the Queen returned to the Palace in the same state as she came from it. The procession was graced by the presence of Ambassadors extraordinary from all the European Courts, and the decorations of the carriages, &c., were splendid in the extreme. The hammercloth alone of the Queen's carriage, cost 1000*l.*; and the other portions of the equipages were on a similar scale of magnificence.

The appearance of the streets through which the procession passed, reminded the spectators of the "olden time," when, on such occasions of public rejoicing, the fronts of the houses were adorned with tapestry and garlands of flowers. Wherever a sight could be obtained galleries had been raised, and these were beautified with exceedingly good taste. Most of them had crimson or other coloured cloth, festooned in front, and the pillars which supported the temporary roofs were wreathed with laurel and flowers. One of these galleries, erected by the order of the Duke of Devonshire, in front of his house in Piccadilly, was perhaps as handsome as anything of the kind could be; and a similar desire to combine elegance with convenience was observable in all the temporary galleries raised along the line of streets through which the Queen passed.

The amusements provided for the people have never been surpassed. Instead of having, as formerly, barrels of beer, &c., opened in the streets, and such like proceedings, a more rational entertainment was provided. Nearly every place of public amusement in London was opened for the evening. The tickets for admission were distributed gratuitously the day previous, so that the theatres were not filled more than on ordinary occasions; and, indeed, many of them were very thinly attended, in consequence of the people being attracted elsewhere by other amusements. The patent theatres received 400*l.* each, and the minors 100*l.* each, for the use of the house and the company for the evening.

In addition to these entertainments a fair was held in Hyde Park, which continued three days. It was the largest ever known in London; and the booths, &c., having been erected under the superintendence of an officer in the police, every means was taken to prevent confusion, and increase the enjoyments of those who attended.

In the afternoon a balloon ascended from the Green Park, close to the ranger's in Piccadilly, from whence the gas was laid on; so that every one had an opportunity of witnessing the in-



flation, and every thing connected with what is generally considered so interesting an occurrence.

In each of the Parks—in the Green Park, adjoining the Palace, and in Hyde Park, near the Bayswater Gate—were erected two very large fire-work galleries, from which, at about eleven o'clock in the evening, commenced a most magnificent display. The artists who had been engaged to prepare the fire-works exerted themselves to the utmost of their abilities, and the result was an exhibition such as had not been witnessed since the grand jubilee, in celebration of the fiftieth year of the reign of George III., in 1810. The discharge of the fire-works continued for two hours, and such a display will probably not be seen again for many years. The Queen and nobility at the Palace witnessed the exhibition from the balconies.

The concourse of people who attended these entertainments were immense; and yet, in consequence of the excellent arrangements that had been made, the whole passed off in the best manner possible. A general holiday was observed throughout London; all the shops were closed, and business was suspended for the day. The crowd in the streets was immense, and yet very few accidents, and those of a trivial nature, occurred. Along the streets through which the Queen passed, policemen and soldiers were stationed a few paces apart from each other, and by this means preserved the road clear; and in consequence of the people being thus obliged to form a line along the pavement, very little difficulty was experienced by those who were content to remain on one spot for some little time, in viewing the procession. The streets were more crowded in the morning than when the Queen returned in the afternoon, the people not having dispersed themselves so much at the different places of amusement.

In the evening the whole of London was brilliantly illuminated, and the various tradesmen seemed to vie with each other in producing the grandest display. The use of gas instead of oil in the lamps rendered the streets as light as day, and greatly increased the brilliancy of the illuminations.

Great praise is due to those who made the various arrangements for the ceremony and proceedings connected with it, for the excellent manner in which every difficulty was provided against, and the enjoyments of the people secured in the most perfect manner.



# MEMOIRS

## OF THE

### PRINCIPAL POETS HAVING MONUMENTS IN THE ABBEY.

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THERE are few persons who, after visiting the Abbey, have not wished to know something more respecting the originals of the monuments they have seen, than can be learnt from the guide or the epitaphs. We naturally wish to ascertain what has raised these individuals so high above their fellow countrymen, that they are honoured with a tomb in an edifice sacred to genius, rank, and talent. And the gratification of such a desire, in the minds of young persons, may be made productions of much benefit; it may be made the means of conveying instruction of the most useful kind in a pleasing and agreeable form. Biography is the most interesting kind of history, and when it relates to such persons as those who lie buried in Westminster Abbey, it possesses an additional attraction. In the following pages, each memoir will convey some lesson that may be studied with advantage. However eminent may have been the poet, or however great the fame of the philosopher, they were but men, and as such were liable to all the frailties and passions of others less gifted than themselves. In viewing their follies, therefore, we do but hold the mirror up to nature for our own inspection, and it will be well if we try to imitate their virtues with the same alacrity with which we detect their faults.

#### CHAUCER.

A LITTLE to the left, on entering the Abbey from the door at Poet's Corner, stands the monument erected to the memory of "the father of English poetry," GEOFFREY CHAU-

CER. It is an old tomb, so old, indeed, that the inscription on it has become obliterated, and it is with great difficulty that even the name "Chaucer," can be deciphered. But he requires "no storied urn or animated bust" to preserve his name from perishing; the works he has left behind him will do this even when the monument that records his name has crumbled into dust. We are indebted in a great measure to Chaucer for the first important improvement in our language. He not merely improved it; he introduced so many words of continental origin in his poetry, that he entirely remodelled the English tongue; and has left behind him, in his "Canterbury Tales," an imperishable evidence of his genius. Amongst the number of illustrious names that surround the spectator in Poet's Corner, that of Chaucer is alone likely to be passed unnoticed, in consequence of the present state of the tomb, which reflects little honour on the many admirers of his writings in the present day. It was erected in 1556, and originally bore the following inscription in Latin :—

"Of English bards, who sang the sweetest strains,  
Old Geoffery Chaucer now this tomb contains :  
For his death's date if reader thou shouldst call,  
Look but beneath, and it will tell thee all."

25 October, 1400.

N. Brigham placed these, in the name of the Muses, at his own expense, 1556.

And the following lines are said to have been inscribed on a brass ledge, since removed :—

"If who I was you ask, Fame shall declare ;  
If Fame denies, since frail all glories are,  
These stones shall speak, inscribed with pious care."

Chaucer was born in London in the year 1328. Respecting his parents nothing is known; but his name, derived from the French, would seem to imply "a shoemaker," from whence it is probable that his ancestors had derived their surname from their calling. His parents must, however, have moved in a respectable rank in society, since he was educated at Oxford. He is said to have made so rapid a progress in his studies, that he composed



the "Court of Love," a poetical piece of considerable merit, at the age of eighteen years. Shortly after leaving Oxford, he obtained an introduction to some of the influential persons in the court of Edward III., and was employed occasionally on state business. Previous to this, however, he had for a time made the law his study, and belonged to the Inner Temple. He was at this time rather gay in his manners, and there is a record preserved wherein it is stated, that "Geoffery Chaucer was fined two shillings for beating a Franciscan Friar in Fleet-street." He is said to have been while young one of the handsomest men of his time. His complexion is depicted in an original picture as fair and beautiful; his lips red and full, his figure of just proportion, and his air graceful and majestic. Having been introduced to the Duke of Lancaster, he soon found means to make himself of service to that nobleman, and obtained his patronage and support. The king granted him an annuity of twenty marks, and he was employed as a page at court. The royal family then frequently resided at Woodstock, and lately there existed a square stone house at this place, which was said to have been the residence of Chaucer. Here he had opportunity to cultivate his taste for poetry, although unlike most of the writers of that period, he at the same time attended to his business, or, more properly speaking, his professional duties. His course of living in this rural scene was temperate and regular; he was excessively fond of walking, and preferred it before all other sports and exercises; and to his going to rest with the sun and rising with the lark, we are probably indebted for the many beautiful descriptions in his poetry of evening and the dawn of day, that still charm us by their freshness of reality. Having been appointed one of the three envoys to proceed to Genoa on state business, he was present at a marriage feast in Italy, and had the opportunity of being introduced to the great Italian poet, Petrarch, and several others. It is probably to this fortunate circumstance that we are indebted for the "Canterbury Tales." They are many of them taken from Boccacio's "Decameron," and are written on a singular

plan. It was no doubt in consequence of his intimacy with the Italian poets, that he conceived the idea of his own work. Chaucer subsequently obtained the office of controller of the wool customs, and also of wines, on condition that he should write the rolls respecting the wools "with his own hand, and not execute the office by substitute," a practice very frequent when even the nobility of the land could not very often write their own names, but were obliged to sign documents with a cross. He is represented as having filled the office with strict integrity, and not to have incurred the slightest censure for any dishonest practices, when, in consequence of the enormous embezzlements in the customs, the offices were purged in the reign of Edward III. He was now in the height of his prosperity, but having unfortunately involved himself in a dissension between the citizens of London and the court, he was obliged to fly to France for protection. The origin of the quarrel was in consequence of the Lord Mayor of London having attempted to reform many ecclesiastical abuses against which Wickliffe, the early English reformer of the church, had preached with great success. Chaucer was no enemy to religion, nor to the church of Rome either, but he assailed in the strongest terms the licentiousness of the clergy. It is remarkable how great a proportion persons connected with ecclesiastical establishments bear to the other travellers in Chaucer's celebrated "Canterbury Tales;" and if in selecting his company he gives us a faithful picture of the state of society, it is a strong illustration of the undue preponderance of the clerical profession, and of the multiplication of convents, monasteries, and religious orders, to the injury even of the church. In a promiscuous assemblage of thirty-one persons belonging to the middle classes of society, we find a *prioress*, a *nonne*, three *preestes*, a *monk*, a *frere*, a *clerk of Oxenford*, a *persone*, a *soumpnour*, a *pardounere*. Although, however, he attacked the vices of most of these persons, he was a sincere admirer of clergymen who lived as became their profession. In proof of this, we may adduce the following description of a "poor parson" from "The Canterbury Tales," and

which will afford a fair specimen of Chaucer's powers as a poet. The character has been admired in all ages:—

“ A good man, ther was, of religioun,  
 That was a poure PERSONE of a town :  
 But riche he was of holy thought and werk,  
 He was also a lerned man, a clerk,  
 That Cristes gospel trewly wolde preche ;  
 His parishens devoutly wolde he teche.  
 Benigne he was, and wonder diligent,  
 And in adversite ful patient,—  
 And such he was proved often sithes :  
 Ful loth were him to cursen for his tithes ;  
 But rather wolde he yeven, out of doute,  
 Unto his poure parishens, about,  
 Of his offring, and, eke, of his substance.  
 He coude in little thing have suffisance.  
 Wide was his parish, and houses fer asonder ;  
 But he ne left nought, for no rain ne thunder,  
 In sikeness and in mischief to visite  
 The ferrest in his parish, moche and lite,—  
 Upon his fete, and in his hand a staf.  
 This noble ensample to his shepe he yaf,—  
 That, first he wrought ; and afterward he taught ;  
 Out of the gospel he the wordes caught,  
 And this figure he added yet thereto,  
 That if gold rust, what shuld iren do ?  
 For if a priest be foule, on whom we trust,  
 No wondur is a lewde man to rust :  
 And shame it is, if that a preest take kepe,  
 To see an unclene shepherd, and clene sheepe,  
 Wel ought a preest ensample for to yeve,  
 By his clenesse how now his shepe shulde live.”

Such lines as these show how well the poet could appreciate the Christian character ; and it was not, therefore, for attacking religion, but for his exposure of the vices of the clergy, that he was persecuted and driven into exile. Unhappily, “ when troubles come, they come not single spies, but in battalions,” and the poet soon had to experience the ingratitude of those for whom he had suffered banishment, as well as the misery of such a state. The friend on whom he had depended to remit him supplies of money from his income, suddenly discontinued doing so, and left Chaucer to starve in a foreign country. Under these cir-



cumstances he was obliged again to return to England, where his retreat was soon discovered, and as the only means of escaping punishment and again being restored to favour, he confessed the plots that had been and were hatching to disturb the government of the city. For this he was bitterly reproached by many of his cotemporaries, but with how much justice, it is impossible at this distance of time to determine.

After this the poet suffered much from pecuniary difficulties, and was obliged to seek the king's protection from arrest. Richard II. granted him this protection for two years, and afterwards bestowed on him an annuity and various privileges that tended to soften the evils attendant on old age. To this state he attained, and after having passed a life full of adventures and shaded by misfortune, he met death with the serenity of a Christian on the 25th of October, 1400. He was buried in the great south aisle of the Abbey.

Chaucer was in full possession of a high reputation when he died. Unlike many scholars and poets, he had not confined himself to the cloisters, but was well acquainted with the world. He "studied from the life, and in the original perused mankind." Hence it is, that although his poetry was written nearly 500 years ago, it still presents to us scenes and characters that are to be met with in the present day. The age in which he wrote was rude; society was not polished, and therefore some of his poems contain indelicacies of language that render them, to a certain extent, unfit for general perusal. But these faults are few, and in some modern editions have been entirely avoided. There can be little doubt but that, as the taste for reading is more generally diffused amongst the people, he will become as great a favourite with them, as he is now with the select few who can and do appreciate his worth and excellence.

Chaucer's character claims our admiration not merely on account of the genius he exhibited, but for the integrity and moral worth he displayed during a long and active life in the public service. His gratitude to the Duke of Lancaster for the patronage he extended to him, continued

to the latest moment of his life ; and his pen was frequently engaged in defending and eulogising his benefactor. When young, Chaucer appears to have “loved gaiety and pursued the phantom pleasure ;” but as age crept on this disposition was changed, and he became sedate and reserved in his manner. This increased almost to a fault in the latter years of his life, so much so, that on one occasion the Countess of Essex was induced to tell him that “his absence created more mirth than his conversation.” He was married when in the flower of his age to a lady in the suite of the Duchess of Lancaster, to whom he was introduced and recommended by the duke. He left behind him two sons, the eldest of whom attained considerable celebrity, and was three times speaker of the House of Commons.

Chaucer is known chiefly by his principal work, the *Canterbury Tales*, but besides these he wrote many of a poetical description of great merit ; and although in the work just mentioned he appears to excel in humorous description, yet he was equally successful when his writings were of a pathetic character. He was also the author of several prose works ; in all he appears to have endeavoured to improve the morals and the manners of the people. He was a severe satirist, and the immoral conduct of many of the clergy in his time afforded him a wide field in which to exercise his power. Yet as we have seen in the specimen of his poetry we have given, he could justly appreciate the worth and merit of those who were entitled to praise, and he did not fail to approve their conduct. His genius appears to have consisted rather in *perfecting* than in *inventing* : thus the *Canterbury Tales* are well known to have been written on the plan of the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, and many of the tales are translations from the Italian poets. The plan of the work is exceedingly simple ; a number of pilgrims to the shrine at Canterbury agree, in order to relieve the tedium of the journey and amuse the company, to relate some tales ; this they accordingly do, and the collection forms the poet’s chief production. The admirable manner in which he details them will undoubtedly prove a lasting monument of his fame.

## SPENSER.

NEXT to Chaucer, the second great poet of this country in regard to time, is EDMUND SPENSER. He was born in London in the year 1553, and his family appears to have been respectable from the circumstance of his being sent to college to complete his education. Here he formed a friendship with many persons of distinction, by some of whom he was introduced to the celebrated Sir Philip Sidney, who obtained for him the protection and support of the Earl of Leicester, at whose mansion in Kent he resided for a long period. To these noblemen he dedicated his first productions, and the manner in which he was rewarded may be learned from the following anecdote:—Before any part of the “Faerie Queen” was published, a portion of it was submitted to Sir Philip Sidney for his approval. It is said that on reading the description of “despair,” he was so delighted with its poetic excellence that he ordered his steward to pay Spenser fifty pounds. Sidney’s delight and admiration increased as he proceeded; he ordered a second, a third, and fourth remuneration, till at last the bounty reached two hundred pounds. He then directed his steward to pay the poet immediately, lest he should bestow the whole of his estate on the writer of such verses.” The manner in which the patrons of literature used to bestow their rewards in those days renders this story extremely probable. Shortly afterwards, Spenser, through the influence of the Earl of Leicester, obtained the office of secretary to the lord lieutenant of Ireland, and about the same time formed an intimacy with Sir Walter Raleigh. Being recalled from Ireland, he subsequently resided a short time at the court; and afterwards obtained a grant of the forfeited lands of the Earl of Desmond, at Cork, in Ireland. By the term of the grant he was obliged to reside on his estate, and thither he accordingly removed; and in this place, away from the turmoil of politics and the cares of business, he finished the “Faerie Queene.” This work introduced him to the notice of Queen Elizabeth, by whom he was appointed “poet laureate,” with a pension of fifty pounds a year. Spenser, however, had



many difficulties to contend with in order to obtain the reward of royal favour. When the queen's councillor, Lord Burleigh, heard of the pension, he told her that it was beyond example too great to be given to a *ballad-maker*, and for a time intercepted the payment of the money. Upon another occasion, when Spenser presented some poems to the queen, she ordered him the gratuity of one hundred pounds. Burleigh was astonished at so large a sum of money being bestowed on a poet, and asked, "*What! all this for a song?*" The queen replied, "Then give him what is reason." The poet, however, having long waited in vain for the fulfilment of the royal order, presented to her majesty a memorial in rhyme, which produced immediate payment. The memorial was as follows:—

"I was promised on a time,  
To have reason for my rhyme;  
From that time unto this season,  
I received nor rhyme nor reason."

Shortly after receiving the pension, Spenser married an Irish lady, whom he has celebrated in several sonnets as the "fair Elizabeth," and resided in Ireland on his estate for many years. That unhappy country was, however, even then distracted by internal commotions; a rebellion broke out, and Spenser was obliged to fly for his life. His having accepted the forfeited lands of an Irish nobleman, and the manner in which he had executed the office of secretary to the lord lieutenant, rendered him particularly obnoxious to the rebels; and on arriving at his castle they fired it, and burnt to death his infant child, who had been left behind in consequence of the haste with which he had been obliged to leave his home. These misfortunes, and the poverty to which he was in consequence reduced, preyed so heavily upon his mind that in a few months his constitution was destroyed; and he is represented as ending his life at an obscure inn or lodging-house in King Street, Westminster, of that most terrible of all earthly afflictions—a broken heart! He died on the 16th of Jan-

uary, 1598, having left Ireland the September previous. Shortly after his death the Earl of Essex caused a monument to be erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey, which was subsequently renewed by the Countess of Dorset.

Of the personal character of Spenser it is impossible at this remote period to obtain much authentic information. The “prince of poets in his time needs noe other witnesse than the workes which he left behinde him.” These show him to have been a fond admirer of nature, and as such not given to those habits of sensual gratification which constituted the principal source of enjoyment to the gentlemen of that age. He displays the fondest affection for his wife, and the cause of his death proves that he was a man of acute sensibility.

From the time of Chaucer till the birth of Spenser, literature in this country had remained almost without cultivation. The language itself had not been fixed; although much had been done towards perfecting it, and creating at the same time a desire for reading, by the translation of the Scriptures and their distribution amongst the people. But with Spenser a new era commenced, literature from the lowest state of neglect rose at once to the highest pitch of excellence. “There never was anything like the sixty or seventy years that elapsed from the middle of Elizabeth’s reign to the period of the Restoration,” says a modern critic, “in point of real force and originality of genius; neither the age of Pericles nor the age of Augustus, can come at all into comparison.” Spenser was the first who brought about this happy change. The publication of the “Faery Queen” produced the first beneficial effect on the public mind. It is a poem intended to pourtray in an allegory, the excellence of the virtues who are personified by various knights and ladies. Spenser wrote a letter explanatory to “the right noble and valorous Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight;” which fully describes the intention of the work, and at the same time exhibits a curious specimen of the poet’s prose. It says—

“The general end of all the book is to fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline;

which, for *that*, I conceived should be most plausible and pleasing, being coloured with an historical fiction,—the which the most part of men delight to read, rather for variety of matter, than for profit of the example—I chose the history of King Arthur, as most fit for the excellency of his person, being made famous by many men's former works—and also furthest from the danger of envy and suspicion of present time. I labour to pourtray in Arthur, *before he was king*, the image of a brave knight, perfected in the *twelve private moral virtues*, as Aristotle hath devised; the which is the purpose of the twelve first books, which if I find to be well accepted, I may be perhaps encouraged to frame the other part of politic virtues in his person, after that he came to be king. To some I know this method will seem unpleasing, which had rather have good discipline delivered plainly in way of precepts, or sermoned at large, as they use, than thus cloudily wrapped in allegorical devices. But such I think should be satisfied with the use of these days, seeing all things accounted by their shows, and nothing esteemed that is not delightful and pleasing in common sense. So have I laboured to do in the person of Arthur; whom I conceive, after his long education by Timon, to whom he was by Merlin delivered to be brought up, so soon as he was born of the lady Igrayne,—to have seen in a dream or vision the Fairy Queen, with whose excellent beauty ravished, he, awaking, resolved to seek her out; and so being by Merlin armed, and by Timon thoroughly instructed, he went to seek her forth in fairy land.

“The beginning of my history, if it were to be told by an historiographer, should be the twelfth book, which is the last, where I devise that the Fairy Queen kept her annual feast twelve days; upon which twelve several days the occasions of the twelve several adventures happened, which being undertaken by twelve several knights, are in these twelve books severally handled and discoursed. The first was this. In the beginning of the feast there presented himself *a tall clownish young man*, who falling before the queen of the fairies, desired a boon (as the manner then was) which



during that feast she might not refuse ; which was that he might have the achievement of any adventure which during that feast should happen. That being granted, he rested him on the floor, unfit through his rusticity for a better place. Soon after entered a fair lady in mourning weeds, riding on a white ass, with a dwarf behind her leading a warlike steed that bore the arms of a knight, and his spear in the dwarf's hand. She falling before the queen of the fairies, complained that her father and mother, an ancient king and queen, had been by a huge dragon many years shut up in a brazen castle, who thence suffered them not to issue, and therefore besought the Fairy Queen to assign her some one of her knights to take upon him that exploit. Presently, that clownish person upstarting, desired that adventure ; whereat the queen much wondering and the lady much gainsaying ; yet he earnestly importuned his desire. In the end the lady told him that unless that armour which she brought would serve him (that is the armour of a Christian man specified by St. Paul in Ephesians) that he could not succeed in that enterprize ; which being forthwith put upon him, with due furniture thereunto, he seemed the goodliest man in all that company, and was well liked of his lady. And afterwards taking on him knighthood, and mounting on that strange courser, he went forth with her on that adventure : wherein beginneth the first book."

Only six books of the " Faery Queen " have reached our time. It is said the poet completed his design, but that the manuscript was lost in a passage from Ireland. The poem even with this deficiency is of too great length as an allegory ; it is, however, full of beautiful imagery, and the versification is smooth and melodious. The stanza adopted admits of great variety of composition and expression, and in honour of the originator is termed the Spenserian stanza. Three very noble poetical works have been composed in it, and it is not a little remarkable that all of them remain unfinished. The "*Faery Queen*" is imperfect, and it is doubtful whether it was ever finished. The *Minstrel* of Dr. Beattie was likewise brought to an abrupt conclusion ;

and the celebrated *Don Juan* of Lord Byron, written in the same stanza, is a third important poem that remains incomplete. These three productions, as dissimilar in subject, style, and execution, as they possibly can be, show the beauty of the stanza, and its applicability to every species of poetical composition.

Spenser is entirely free from the grossness that disfigures so many of Chaucer's writings, and although, in consequence of his having endeavoured in many instances to render his language unnecessarily obsolete, he is not so often referred to by the modern reader as he otherwise would be; yet his works on the whole present us with "a well of English undefiled," from which we may derive some of the most beautiful imagery, and melodious versification, to be found in our language.

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## SHAKSPEARE.

It is one of the most remarkable events in literary history, that the poet, who during his life was so highly and deservedly admired, for the brilliancy of his wit, and the beauty of his poetry, and whose writings have subsequently become literally "household words" to all his countrymen, should have had his manners and conversation regarded with so little attention, that we are ignorant at the present time of nearly everything respecting him. Shakspeare has been dead but very little more than two hundred years, and yet not one conversational remark, or celebrated expression of this great man has reached us: we know nothing of his personal habits; and the materials for his brief biography have only been gained from obscure sources by the indefatigable industry of his admirers.

WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE was born at Stratford on Avon, in Warwickshire, the 23rd of April, 1564. His father was a respectable tradesman of that town, being a dealer in wool, and the great dramatist was sent to school to acquire the instruction proper for a person in his station in life. He appears, in his younger days, to have been much addicted

to what is miscalled pleasure ; and his companions were more notorious for their idle and dissolute manners, than for the good conduct that renders youth amiable. He no doubt acquired many of their vicious habits, as we find (and this is the only incident recorded of his early years) that he was prosecuted for deer stealing in the park of a Sir Thomas Lucy, and in consequence was obliged to quit his native town and repair to London. Previous to this occurrence, at the early age of nineteen, he married Anne Hathaway, whose charms he has celebrated in some punning lines upon name. It does not appear that his worldly fortune was improved by his union, although his wife was the daughter of a substantial farmer who resided in his neighbourhood ; and the pleasure of her company, and the delights of home, were not sufficient to wean him from his dissolute companions. He continued to engage with them in many of their exploits ; but having, as just mentioned, been prosecuted for deer stealing, he repaired to London, probably to avoid the consequences ; not, however, before he had written a satirical attack in verse upon Sir Thomas Lucy ; which, although in no way indicating a superior genius, shows that his education was far better than that of many persons in a similar rank of life to himself, who, at that period, could not even write their own names.

When Shakspeare arrived in London, he appears to have been immediately attracted to the place where he would most probably meet with company as nearly resembling that he had left behind as possible ; this was the playhouse. Theatres at that time were regarded in a very different light to what they are at present. They were the rendezvous for the fops of the court, the rake, the man of pleasure, and others, whose chief care was how to pass their time pleasantly, not how to improve it. The theatre was an amusement, but nothing more ; and the manners of the age tolerated indecencies in performance and in language, that rendered it an amusement of a highly immoral and pernicious tendency. To the theatre, however, Shakspeare first directed his steps, and obtained a situation in some humble capacity. What this was in the first instance, is



not distinctly known : it is said that he merely took care of the horses at the door until the performance was concluded : but “the Globe” theatre, at which he was first engaged, was situated on the banks of the Thames, in Southwark, and the company generally came by water, and not on horseback, so that there could be little employment for him in the capacity assigned. It appears more probable that he was first engaged as “call boy,” to let the performers know when they were required on the stage. This, however, is one of the meanest offices at the theatre ; and it is therefore apparent, either that Shakspeare when he arrived in London was in a state of extreme want, and obliged to accept any situation he could procure, or that his passion for the stage made him accept the humblest employment offered him connected with it. By degrees his talent begun to exhibit itself : he became a performer, and afterwards commenced writing those exquisite tragedies and comedies that have made his name an honour to his country, and spread his fame over the whole world. His works soon introduced him to the notice of the nobility and the literary men of his age. Queen Elizabeth herself had his plays repeatedly performed before her, and was so much delighted with the character of Sir John Falstaff, in the tragedy of Henry the Fourth, that she desired him to write another play, in which the adventures of the fat knight should be continued. Shakspeare accordingly composed “the Merry Wives of Windsor” for that purpose, and was well rewarded by the queen for his labours. He was also patronized by the Earl of Southampton, and many other noblemen of that time. His first play was written when he was about twenty-seven years old ; but it is probable that before that time he was in the habit of revising and preparing the works of others for the stage. The first play he wrote is supposed to have been “A Midsummer Night’s Dream,” and the last, “Twelfth Night.” In all, thirty-five plays are attributed to his pen, but of these probably three or four are the productions of others, with additions by himself. Having acquired money by his earlier productions, he was enabled to become a part pro-

prietor in the theatre at Bankside, and realized considerable property. With this he purchased a house in his native town of Stratford on Avon, to which he soon afterwards retired, to pass the remainder of his life in the enjoyment of the fruits of his labours, and the company of his friends. His death appears to have been sudden. He made his will in the beginning of the year 1616, "in perfect health and memory," but died on his birthday, the 23rd of April following. It is not known what disorder terminated his existence; but being only 53 years old, it was probably by one of the casualties to which we are all liable. He was buried in the church-yard of his native town.

Of the moral character of Shakspeare, we must in some measure be allowed to judge from probabilities. He was evidently not regular and temperate in his youth, but it is also certain that after his arrival in London, his manners underwent a great change, and he became an affectionate husband and kind parent. In describing the character of Henry V., he has portrayed his own, and no language can better describe his intellectual and moral worth.

"Hear him but reason in divinity,  
And, all admiring, with an inward wish  
You would desire that *he* were made a prelate :  
Hear him debate of commonwealth affairs,  
You would say,—it had been all-in-all his study :  
List his discourse of war, and you shall hear  
A fearful battle render'd you in music :  
Turn him to any cause of policy,  
The Gordian knot of it he will unloose  
Familiar as his garter ; that, when he speaks,  
The air, a charter'd libertine, is still,  
And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears,  
To steal his sweet and honied sentences ;  
So that the art and practice part of life  
Must be the mistress to this theoric :  
Which is a wonder, how his grace should glean it,  
Since his addiction was to courses vain ;  
His companies unletter'd, rude, and shallow ;  
His hours fill'd up with riots, banquets, sports ;  
And never noted in him any study,  
Any retirement, any sequestration  
From open haunts and popularity.

The strawberry grows underneath the nettle ;  
And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best,  
Neighbour'd by fruit of baser quality :  
And so the prince obscur'd his contemplation  
Under the veil of wildness ; which, no doubt,  
Grew like the summer grass, faster by night,  
Unseen, yet cresceive in his faculty."

Dr. Johnson has analysed the worth of Shakspeare, as a writer, with a power and discrimination that surpasses every other critic. It is subjoined as the best criticism that has yet been written on the subject, "Shakspeare," says he, "is, above all writers, at least all modern writers, the poet of nature ; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life. His characters are not modified by the custom of particular places, unpractised by the rest of the world ; by the peculiarities of studies or professions, which can operate but upon small numbers ; or by the accidents of transient fashions, or temporary opinions ; they are the genuine progeny of common humanity, such as the world will always supply, and observation will always find. His persons act and speak by the influence of those general passions and principles by which all minds are agitated, and the whole system of life is continued in motion. In the writings of other poets, a character is too often an individual ; in those of Shakspeare it is commonly a species. It is from this wide extension of design that so much instruction is derived. It is this which fills the plays of Shakspeare with practical axioms and domestic wisdom. It was said of Euripides, that every verse was a precept ; and it may be said of Shakspeare, that from his works may be collected a system of civil and economical prudence. Yet his real power is not shown in the splendour of particular passages, but in the progress of his fable, and the tenor of his dialogue ; and he that tries to recommend him by select quotations, will succeed like the pedant in Hierocles ; who, when he offered his house to sale, carried a brick in his pocket as a specimen. Upon every other stage the universal agent is love, by whose power all good and evil is distributed, and every action quickened or retarded. But love is only one of



many passions ; and, as it has no great influence upon the sum of life, it has little operation in the dramas of a poet who caught his ideas from the living world, and exhibited only what he saw before him. He knew that any other passion, as it was regular or exorbitant, was a cause of happiness or calamity. Characters thus ample and general were not easily discriminated and preserved ; yet perhaps no poet ever kept his characters more distinct from each other. Other dramatists can only gain attention by hyperbolical or aggravated characters, by fabulous and unexampled excellence or depravity, as the writers of barbarous romances invigorated the reader by a giant and a dwarf ; and he that should from his expectations of human affairs, from the play, or from the tale, would be equally deceived. Shakspeare has no heroes ; his scenes are occupied only by men who act and speak as the reader thinks that he should himself have spoken or acted on the same occasion : even where the agency is supernatural, the dialogue is level with life. Other writers disguise the most natural passions, and most frequent incidents ; so that he who contemplates them in the book will not know them in the world. Shakspeare approximates the remote, and familiarises the wonderful ; the event which he represents will not happen ; but, if it were possible, its effects would probably be such as he had assigned : and it may be said, that he has not only shown human nature as it acts in real exigencies ; but as it would be found in trials to which it cannot be exposed. This, therefore, is the praise of Shakspeare ; that his drama is the mirror of life ; that he who has mazed his imagination in following the phantoms which other writers raise up before him, may here be cured of his delicious ecstasies, by reading human sentiments in human language ; by scenes from which a hermit may estimate the transactions of the world, and a confessor predict the progress of the passions."

The monument to the memory of Shakspeare in the south transept of the Abbey, was erected in the year 1740 ; a public subscription having been raised for the purpose. The receipts of the two theatres, Drury Lane

and Covent Garden, for one night, were appropriated to the same purpose.

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### BEN JONSON.

AMONGST the writers who have contributed to the beauty and advancement of our language, few are entitled to be spoken of with greater respect than BENJAMIN JONSON. He was the son of a clergyman, and was born on the 11th June 1574. At an early age he was placed at Westminster School, being intended for the clerical profession; but his mother having been left a widow in poor circumstances, was induced to marry a bricklayer, by whom Jonson was taken from school, and obliged to apply to the same trade. Being however naturally of a high spirit, and likewise a scholar, he felt himself degraded by his employment, and enlisted as a soldier to fight against the Spaniards. Returning to England he found friends who placed him at St. John's College, Cambridge, but engaging in a duel he killed his adversary, for which he was tried and condemned to be executed. His friends obtained his pardon, and he then engaged himself in several strolling companies as an actor, and was afterwards made poet Laureate to James I. By the kindness of Shakspeare he was first brought into notice as a dramatic writer, and produced several plays which were favourably received. Poverty however compelled him to apply to Charles I for an increase of his pension, but the king in reply sent him only ten guineas. This meanness exasperated Jonson, and he is said to have told the messenger, "His Majesty has sent me ten guineas because I am poor and live in an alley; go and tell him that his soul lives in an alley." His Majesty received the message as a good jest, and presented the poet with a hundred pounds. He was afterwards rewarded with an annual salary of that amount, and a tierce of Canary wine, the perquisite of all poets Laureate since his time. He died in 1637, in the 63rd year of his age, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His monument is well known from its quaint epitaph. "O rare Ben Jonson," which is said

originally to have been cut in the stone for eighteen-pence, at the desire of Sir John Young, who was present when the grave was covered in. This story however is very improbable. Sir William Davenant paid for the erection of the monument subsequently, and is generally supposed to be author of the Epitaph.

The literary merit of Jonson must be estimated by the effect his writings had in advancing the literature of the age in which he lived, rather than by their intrinsic worth compared with the production of more modern times. But they contain much good poetry; and he particularly excelled in an epigrammatic style, of which his epitaph on Sir Philip Sidney's sister is a well known and beautiful example,—

“Underneath this marble herse  
Lies the subject of all verse  
Sidney's sister Pembroke's mother.  
Death ! ere thou hast slain another  
Learn'd, and fair, and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee.”

This epitaph on Shakspeare is also remarkable for its characteristic quaintness.

“The figure that thou here seest put,  
It was for gentle Shakspeare cut;  
Wherein the graver had a strife  
With nature to outdo the life.  
O, could he but have drawn his wit  
As well in brass, as he hath hit  
This face, the print would then surpass  
All that was even writ in brass:  
But since he cannot, reader, look,  
Not on his picture, but his book.”

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### MILTON.

It is unfortunate for the memory of Milton that his Biography has been written by Dr. Johnson. Differing in his ideas of government, life and manners, not less than in his religious opinions, and estimate of poetic excellence, it is not surprising that the biographer should have condemned in the poet what he opposed in the world. The consequence



of this diversity of feeling is, that many of Milton's opinions and actions are perverted or misrepresented by Johnson, and motives are imputed to him that he never entertained. The moral worth of the author of "Paradise Lost," must however be appreciated as it deserves, by those who will judge him by the benevolent tendency of his works and actions, rather than by the false standard of opinion only.

JOHN MILTON was born 9th Dec., 1608, in Bread Street, Cheapside, London. In his earlier years he received the education proper for the son of a gentleman; having first studied under a private tutor, afterwards at St. Paul's School, and subsequently at Christ's College, Cambridge. In his earlier years he displayed considerable precocity of intellect, and studied the Latin language with so much success that he is said to have been "the first Englishman who, after the revival of letters, wrote Latin verses with classic elegance." In 1628 he obtained a degree of bachelor of arts, but subsequently quitted college in disgust, having been disgraced for some trifling fault by corporeal punishment. He was the last student at either university who suffered this public indignity. After this he returned and lived with his father for a few years, during which period he produced "the mask of Comus," and several other elegant poetical compositions. He is described as being at this time extremely handsome. His statue was about the middle size, well proportioned, and neither too lean nor too corpulent. His limbs were graceful and active, and "his hair, which was of a light brown, parted at the fore-top and hung down upon his shoulders." His face was full of intelligence, and the brightness of his eyes gave no evidence of the calamity that was afterwards to befall them. On the death of his mother Milton went abroad and visited Paris, where he was introduced to the celebrated Grotius. From thence he passed on into Italy, and by diligent study made himself master of the language; he visited the academies, and by his compositions rose high in the estimation of the learned. It was his intention to have proceeded into Greece, but the civil war breaking out between Charles the First and his parliament, Milton considered it his duty to return home

and take a part in the struggle. This he did by supporting those who opposed the king; and not only was his powerful pen engaged in the cause, but it is recorded by Johnson,—who however endeavours to raise a contemptuous smile at “the man who hastens home because his countrymen are contending for their liberty, and when he reaches the scene of action, vapours away his patriotism.” It is recorded even by the author of this passage, “that in the civil wars Milton lent his personal estate to the Parliament, and when after the contest was decided he solicited repayment, he met not only with neglect, but *sharp rebuke*.” Being much reduced in circumstances, he undertook the education of his sister’s sons, in a small lodging in St. Bride’s Church-yard, from whence he afterwards removed to Aldersgate Street, and increased the number of his pupils. Milton’s scholars however were all of them sons of his friends, and in his system of instruction he included what was almost neglected in his time, a knowledge of the physical sciences. About this time he published various political works and engaged with eagerness in the controversy between the puritans and their opponents. His “speech on the liberty of unlicensed printing,” is an evidence of his power as a writer, and his earnestness as a politician. But his great political work was one entitled, “a defence of the people,” in answer to a book written by a Dutch professor of extraordinary learning, at the request of Charles II., called “a defence of Royalty.” Milton executed his task with such wonderful ability that he received a thousand pounds from the national purse as his reward, and the book was read by all classes of the people. Yet this work was executed while he was labouring under a severe attack of illness, and while he was gradually losing the power of sight. Shortly afterwards he became stone blind, and his wife, whom he had married while living in Aldersgate Street, died in childbed. His wife had left him shortly after her marriage to pay a visit to her friends, and refused to return to him. Finding her resolute he published three works “on marriage and divorce,” and declared his intention of uniting himself to another lady. His wife seeing him re-

solute, found means to be reconciled to him, and subsequently bore him three children. After her death he again married, but this lady died within a twelvemonth, from the same cause as his first wife. During this period he was engaged as Latin secretary to Cromwell, but on his death, having withdrawn himself from public life, he commenced the execution of the great poetical work that has immortalized his name. He had for many years intended to produce something "that the world would not willingly let die," and had commenced writing a dictionary of the English language, and a history of this country, but his blindness prevented him bringing these works to a completion. "Paradise Lost," was however commenced under these disadvantages, and at a time too when his safety was endangered by the restoration of Charles II. In order to avoid persecution he was compelled for a time to secret himself in Bartholomew Close, but an act of oblivion having been passed, his person and property were exempted from danger, and he was again at liberty to proceed with his work in peace. The manner in which it was produced is a remarkable illustration of the power of genius to overcome all difficulties. It is commonly reported that the poem was written by Milton's daughters from his dictation, but Dr. Johnson asserts, that the daughters did not know how to write, and that the poet was obliged to avail himself of the assistance of any friend who might call upon him, to write such lines as he had composed and retained in his memory. The production of so noble an example of the power and beauty of our language under such circumstances as these, cannot fail to increase our admiration of the poet's genius. The poem was the work of many years, and greatly relieved the unfortunate condition of Milton in consequence of his blindness. This, indeed, was his principal reward, for when completed the bookseller would only give *five pounds* for the copyright. It was agreed that the poet should receive an additional five pounds for every new edition of thirteen hundred copies; by which means the bookseller secured himself from loss, and in fact only allowed Milton to have a small share of the profits that should accrue from



the sale of the work. Three editions were printed, and at his death his widow sold all her interest in the poem for eight pounds; the whole sum therefore received for "Paradise Lost," was only *twenty-eight pounds*. That the poem was appreciated at the time of publication is evident from the circumstance of thirteen hundred copies having been sold in two years, at a time when those who opposed the court were neglected or decried, and when the number of readers were not in proportion of one in a hundred at the present time. Milton's genius was acknowledged, and he was stimulated to renewed exertions.

Within three years after the publication of "Paradise Lost," he produced "Paradise Regained," a poem, which he always regarded with more favour than the former; but the public taste has been uniformly in opposition to his judgment. After this he published some essays and minor productions, and continued to exercise his pen even to the last year of his life. He died of an attack of the gout, by which he had long suffered, on the 10th of November, 1674, at his house in Bunhill Fields, in the 66th year of his age, and was buried in Cripplegate Church. A monument was subsequently erected to his memory in the Abbey, but not without some opposition. Party feeling was strong against him for his advocacy of Republicanism; "When the inscription for the monument of Phillips, in which he was said to be 'only second to Milton,' was exhibited to Dr. Spratt, then dean of Westminster, he refused to admit it; the name of Milton was, in his opinion, too detestable to be read on the wall of a building dedicated to devotion." The dean who succeeded Spratt, however, allowed the inscription to be raised.

Whatever difference of opinion may exist regarding the political character of Milton, his personal character is eminently deserving approbation. He was indefatigable in acquiring learning, and we are indebted to his profound knowledge on almost every subject, for the beautiful imagery with which "Paradise Lost" abounds. "He knew all the languages which are considered either as learned or polite. Hebrew, with its two dialects, Greek,

Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish. In Latin, his skill was such as places him in the first rank of writers and critics, and he appears to have cultivated Italian with uncommon diligence." He could repeat nearly the whole of Homer by art! He is charged by Johnson with being severe and arbitrary in his family, but no proof of this is given, except that his opinion of what ought to constitute the education of women did not allow him to instruct his daughters so liberally as we may think he should have done. When he was offered an official situation under Charles II., and was pressed by his wife to accept it, he said to her, "You, like other women, want to ride in your coach; my wish is to live and die like an honest man." Such conduct may appear arbitrary to a few, but the majority of mankind will applaud it as conscientious and praiseworthy. We have, however, positive proofs of his benevolence and kindness of disposition. When the relations of his first wife, who had caused him much anguish of mind by inducing her to leave him, were in distress and danger for their political opinions, which were opposed to his, he received them into his house, and kindly entertained them for a long time. And by his influence, his brother, whose politics were likewise in opposition to his own, was protected from danger, and enabled to pursue a lucrative profession with success. Milton was extremely temperate in his habits. He seldom drank anything stronger than water, and his diet was very frugal. When young, he was accustomed to sit up late at night to study, but finding that this practice injured his health, he afterwards went earlier to rest,—about nine or ten o'clock in the evening, and rose at four in summer and five in the winter. It is pleasing to contemplate the simple habits of this great man, and see with what trifling amusements he could solace himself under his heavy affliction—blindness; and when he had "fallen on evil days and evil tongues, with darkness and with danger compass'd round." After he was blind, when he first rose in the morning, he had a chapter in the Hebrew Bible read to him, and studied till twelve; he then took exercise for an hour and afterwards dined. He then

entertained himself with some simple amusement. He was fond of swinging, and sometimes played upon an organ and sung, or had one of his daughters to sing to him. Afterwards he again studied till six ; then saw company till eight, “ then supped, and after a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water, went to bed.”

Whatever faults the character of Milton may present, we cannot but admire the undeviating honesty with which he supported the cause that he thought just, not being content merely to chastise his opponents with “ the valour of his tongue,” but giving up to the cause his time and fortune also. Nor can we less admire the simplicity of character that made him withdraw himself from the world when the licentiousness of the court of Charles II. began to infect and poison the manners of society. He bore all his misfortunes with exemplary patience, and even the dreadful calamity of blindness—to a mind like his, perhaps the most awful that could happen—only stimulated him to turn his eyes within and view himself, and undertake the production of that surpassing poem, the glory of his country and the admiration of the world.

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### BUTLER.

THE life of SAMUEL BUTLER, the author of the well-known *Hudibras*, presents little to attract the attention of the general reader, although the merits of his works forbid us to pass him by entirely without notice. He was born at the commencement of the year 1612, and after receiving his education at the free grammar school at Worcester, his father, “ an honest farmer with some small estate,” contrived to send him to Cambridge University, on leaving which, he became clerk to a justice of the peace in Worcestershire. In this situation he appears to have been able to cultivate his taste for the fine arts ; he was a proficient in music and painting. But such amusements were much discountenanced by the Puritans, and when at a subsequent period he entered the family of one of Cromwell’s officers, he was obliged to forego the pleasure he derived from the



cultivation of his taste. This circumstance probably had considerable influence in strengthening his repugnance to the puritans, and it was while in the family of the officer just mentioned, that he first commenced "Hudibras," taking the character of his master for the model of his hero. On the return of Charles II., he published the first part of the poem, which was received with much applause by the king and court. Party feeling gave it an astonishing celebrity, but praise was the author's sole reward. The work, however, introduced him to several friends, in whose society he experienced much pleasure. He had previously married a lady of small fortune, on which he lived, and not having applied himself to any profession, his means of support were limited. In consequence of the neglect with which he was treated, "Hudibras" was never completed, the first three parts having alone been written. Butler died in obscurity in 1680, and was buried in Covent-garden church-yard; a subscription that was set on foot for burying him in Westminster Abbey having failed! The monument at present erected in the Abbey was placed there about sixty years after his death by Mr. Barber, a citizen of London.

Of the poem of "Hudibras," Dr. Johnson remarks, it is one of those compositions of which a nation may justly boast, as the images which it exhibits are domestic, the sentiments unborrowed and unexpected, and the strain of diction original and peculiar. The poem is not, however, wholly English; the original idea is to be found in the "History of Don Quixote," a book to which a mind of the greatest powers may be indebted without disgrace. Cervantes shows a man, who having by the incessant perusal of incredible tales, subjected his understanding to his imagination, and familiarised his mind by pertinacious meditation to trains of incredible events and scenes of impossible existence, goes out in the pride of knighthood to redress wrongs and defend virgins, to rescue virgin princesses, and tumble usurpers from their thrones; attended by a squire, whose cunning, too low for the suspicion of a generous mind, enables him often to cheat his master. The hero of

Butler is a Presbyterian justice, who, in the confidence of legal authority, and the rage of zealous ignorance, ranges the country to repress superstition and correct abuses, accompanied by an independent clerk, disputatious and obstinate, with whom he often debates, but never conquers. Cervantes had so much kindness for Don Quixote, that however he embarrasses him with absurd distresses, he gives him so much sense and virtue as may preserve our esteem ; wherever he is, or whatever he does, he is made, by matchless dexterity, commonly ridiculous, but never contemptible. But for poor Hudibras his poet had no tenderness. He chooses not that any pity should be shown or respect paid him ; he gives him up to laughter and contempt, without any quality that can dignify or protect him. This, too, is accomplished by the exercise of an inexhaustible fund of wit, such as can be found in no other author, and it is scarcely possible to peruse a page without finding some association of images that was never found before.

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### DRYDEN.

JOHN DRYDEN was born on the 9th of August, 1631, near Oundle, in Northamptonshire, and received the elements of his education under the celebrated Dr. Busby, at Westminster School. He appears to have made good progress in his studies, but his early years were not distinguished by any great precocity of intellect, since he did not make his first appearance as a poetical writer until the death of Cromwell, when he eulogised his memory in a poem on the occasion. Charles II. immediately succeeding to the throne, Dryden thought it advisable to modify his political opinions, and in a short time produced a poetical effusion "On the happy Restoration of Charles II." His subsequent exertions pleased the king so well, that he was ultimately made Poet Laureate, with a salary of 100*l.* a year, and a tierce of wine. Dryden derived a considerable sum likewise from his writings for the stage. He was the author of no less than eight-and-twenty plays ; and at

one time agreed to furnish four plays a year to the manager of the principal theatre in London. His exertions, however, did not increase his fortune as we might expect, since the profits of a play seldom exceeded one hundred pounds, and the greater portion of this sum was derived from the proceeds of two or three benefit nights, when the author received the profits of the house. The plays at this time were all written in rhyme, a fashion which, however much it may be ridiculed at the present day by such farces as *Tom Thumb* and *Bombastes Furioso*, was highly approved of by Charles II. and his court. Dryden's reputation was raised so high by these productions, "that for some time a play was considered as less likely to be well received, if some of his verses did not introduce it. The price of a prologue was two guineas, till, being asked to write one for Mr. Southern, he demanded three; "Not," said he, "young man, out of disrespect to you, but the players have had my goods too cheap." He continued his prosperous career as a writer till the accession of James II., when he suddenly changed his religious opinions, and became a Catholic. This sudden conversion exposed him for the remainder of his life to the charge of inconsistency, but as he continued to hold his belief subsequently, when a change of profession would have been advantageous to him, and as he brought up his family to the Catholic religion, it is probable that his conversion was sincere. At the time it produced him many court favours, and he was engaged in various controversies to defend the opinions of the king. He had previously fallen into disrepute with several of the courtiers, having been suspected of writing "an Essay on Satire," in which the Earl of Rochester, the Duchess of Portsmouth, and various other persons of rank, were freely censured for their vices. Although it is known now that the work was the production of the Duke of Buckingham; the parties ridiculed were so much exasperated by it, that they employed some hired ruffians to way-lay and beat Dryden severely, thinking that he was probably the author. This incident affords us some insight into the manners of the period when it occurred.



The most celebrated production of his pen connected with the change of his religious opinions, is entitled "The Hind and the Panther," in which the church of Rome and the church of England are supposed to be represented by those animals, and they debate on the respective merits of their opinions. It is a poem of considerable ability, but in consequence of the form in which it is written, can afford but little instruction or entertainment. At the time of its publication, however, it involved him in a long and unpleasing controversy, which continued with little intermission till his death. So much of his time, indeed, was occupied with the disputes of the day, that he left himself little leisure to increase the number of those productions which have since rendered his name so celebrated. Of these, perhaps, the best known and the most important is "Alexander's Feast," which contains every excellence for which lyric poetry is esteemed. It is said that this poem was produced in a single night, and the rapidity with which Dryden composed when under poetic inspiration, renders this by no means improbable. As an illustration of the ease with which Dryden composed, and the reliance he placed in his mental resources, it may be mentioned that his fables are the result of an agreement with Tonson, his publisher, by which he bound himself to furnish ten thousand verses for three hundred pounds !

On the accession of William III., Dryden was deprived of his office of Poet Laureat, in consequence of his religious opinions, and he was subsequently reduced to great poverty. He was compelled to undergo extreme literary labour, in order to obtain a bare subsistence, and although occasionally assisted by the great and wealthy, was too frequently neglected and forgotten. Like poor Goldsmith, he was the slave of the booksellers. It is related, that on one occasion when some friends visited him, as they were about to leave, they heard somebody else enter the house ; " This," said Dryden, " is Tonson : you will take care not to leave before he goes away, for I have not completed the sheet which I promised him, and if you leave me unprotected, I must suffer all the rudeness to which his resentment can

prompt his tongue," Exposed to such circumstances as these, Dryden passed the latter years of his life, till, being attacked with a mortification of one of his legs, he expired on the 1st of May, 1701, in the seventieth year of his age. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, and the tablet and bust to his memory were erected at the expense of the Duke of Buckingham. He married the lady Elizabeth Howard, daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, by whom he left three sons.

Although Dryden, by many of his satires, appears to have been coarse and unfeeling in his disposition, his friend Congreve says he was of a nature exceedingly humane and compassionate, ready to forgive injuries, and capable of a sincere reconciliation with those who had offended him. His friendship was lasting, but he was diffident in his advances to others, and abhorred intrusion into any society whatever. As his reading had been very extensive, so was he very happy in possessing a memory which retained nearly all he read. He was not more possessed of knowledge than communicative of it, but was devoid of all pedantry and conceit. He was extremely ready and gentle in the correction of the errors of any writer who thought fit to consult him, and full as ready and patient to admit the reprehensions of others, in respect of his own oversights or mistakes.

His literary merit is acknowledged :—

“ Waller was smooth ; but Dryden taught to join  
The varying verse, the full resounding line,  
The long majestic march, and energy divine.”

It is only to be regretted that so many of his productions are filled with satires, which, however excellent of their kind, could possess but a temporary interest. Much of his prose is filled with attacks on his opponents of a similar nature, and well illustrates the savage literary warfare that then existed ; but his excellent essays on criticism, by which he first showed the power and excellence of our language, and illustrated the rules of poetry, are sufficient to excuse innumerable conventional errors. “ From his prose, however, Dryden derives only his accidental and

secondary praise ; the veneration with which his name is pronounced by every cultivator of English literature, is paid to him, as he refined the language, improved the sentiments, and tuned the numbers of English poetry.”

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### ADDISON.

THE character of JOSEPH ADDISON is generally placed before the young as an illustrious example for their study and imitation ; and so highly have his writings been approved, that Dr. Johnson says, “ Whoever wishes to attain an English style, familiar, but not coarse, and elegant, but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison.

He was born on the 1st of May, 1672, at Milston, in Wiltshire, and was christened the same day in consequence of being so excessively weak, that it was not expected he would survive. It is said he was even laid out for dead, but afterwards recovered. After receiving the usual course of school education near his own home, he was subsequently sent to the Charter House, to perfect himself previous to entering College, and it was there he commenced his acquaintance with the celebrated Sir Richard Steele. He entered at Queen’s College, Oxford, in 1687, and prosecuted his studies with much assiduity. It was his intention to have become a clergyman of the Church of England, but having been persuaded by a friend to resign this intention, he gave himself up to literary pursuits, and wrote some poetry which he dedicated to his friend Montague, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, probably, in consequence, obtained a pension of 300*l.* a year for him from the national purse. With this income he set out on his travels, and after staying a short time on the Continent he returned home, and was shortly afterwards made Under-Secretary of State. This honour was conferred on him principally in consequence of his having written a very pleasing poem in celebration of the victory at Blenheim, at the request of Lord Halifax, who subsequently became his patron. A year or two after this, Steele commenced the



publication of the periodical paper that has since become so celebrated under the title of "The Tatler," and Addison, who was in Ireland at the time, having discovered the author by his inserting some of Addison's remarks, the latter immediately assisted his friend by writing a few essays, which he continued doing until the decline of the work. The "Tatler" was succeeded by the "Spectator," and various other works of a similar nature, which were of eminent service in polishing the manners and refining the taste of the public. Nothing of the kind had before appeared in England, and to them may be attributed the origin of the periodicals of the present time. The great benefit the public have derived from these works cannot be too highly appreciated. They have cultivated a taste for reading amongst every class of society, more particularly in that which most requires it—the working class. And at the same time, in consequence of the low price at which these publications may be procured, every person has the opportunity of purchasing them. The present and future generations will be deeply indebted to Addison and his coadjutors, for having first brought to perfection this species of publication; and it is pleasing to know that they saw the beneficial result of their labours during their own lives.

A few years after the publication of the "Tatler," the fame of Addison was still further increased by the production of his celebrated tragedy of "Cato." It is but ill adapted for theatrical representation, but in consequence of the violent party spirit at that time prevailing on political matters, it was vehemently applauded by those who approved its principles, and, in consequence, was most successfully received, and repeated no less than thirty-five nights in succession. Subsequently, on the accession of the House of Hanover to the throne of this country, Addison was made Secretary of State, after having been for some time Secretary to the Regency. In the interim he married the Countess Dowager of Warwick, to whose son he had formerly been tutor. Shortly afterwards he was obliged to resign the office of Secretary of State upon a plea of ill health, in consequence of finding himself wholly unequal to

the duties he was required to perform. "He could not issue an order from his office without losing time in quest of fine expressions," and having essayed to make a speech in the House of Commons without being able to get beyond the first sentence; he was compelled to give up his situation with all its honours and emoluments. After this event, and shortly before his decease, he attacked and quarrelled with his old friend Steele, who, however, bore his anger with kindness, and retorted his incivility only with an extract from his own work "Cato." Addison, shortly after this, was taken seriously ill, and finding his end approaching, endeavoured to make it of use in converting Lord Warwick, a young man of dissolute character, from his irregular habits. He sent for the young Lord, and when he approached his bed and inquired with solicitude to hear his last request, Addison calmly replied, "I have sent for you that you may see how a Christian can die," and shortly afterwards expired. His death took place on the 17th of June, 1719, at Holland House, Kensington.

The moral character of Addison has generally been regarded so much in connection with the tendency of his writings, that there are few men whose lives have been more strongly recommended for example. But it unfortunately happens that the precepts and actions of authors are often greatly at variance; and if the character of Addison be regarded with impartiality and attention, it will be found that there are none to whom the remark will apply with greater force. He has been praised for his modesty and retiring nature, because, as we have seen, he could not summon sufficient courage to address the members of the House of Commons. It is reported, that the only words he could utter were, "I conceive, Sir, I conceive, Sir," which having repeated some half a dozen times, a member of the opposition near him made a pun upon the remark, and quite disconcerting Addison, compelled him to sit down. Whether such bashfulness as this ought not rather to be regarded as a failing against which every man should strive, instead of being recommended as a virtue for imita-

tion, must be left to the good sense of the reader, who will hardly decide wrong. A most unamiable trait in the character of Addison, was his avariciousness. It is recorded, that his affectionate friend Steele, having borrowed a hundred pounds of him, which he was unable to pay on the day he had appointed, Addison issued an execution against him for the amount. And when Addison was secretary to the Lieutenant of Ireland, he made a rule never to omit enforcing the fees to which he was entitled, out of civility, he said, to his friends; "For," said he, "I may have a hundred friends, and if my fee be two guineas, I shall, by relinquishing my right, lose two hundred guineas, and no friend gain more than two; there is, therefore, no proportion between the good imparted and the evil suffered." Addison need not have apologized if the act required no apology; "a necessary act incurs no blame," and if he was in straightened circumstances, he was only acting in justice to himself to take the fees. But the desire of possessing the money appears to have been the strongest motive that induced him to accept it. When the "Spectator" and "Guardian" were published, he "did not satisfy himself with the renown he acquired, but with great eagerness laid hold on his proportion of the profits." Nor, indeed, is the moral character of this eminent man free from the stain of servility. His poverty might excuse his having accepted office under the "impious, profligate, and shameless Wharton, as he is termed by Johnson; but this plea will hardly avail him, for his dedication of the opera which he wrote, in imitation of the Italian, to the Duchess of Marlborough, "a woman without skill, or pretensions to skill, in poetry or literature." His marriage was the result of the same feeling. His desire to be allied to one under whom he had formerly served in the humble capacity of tutor to her son, made him forget that a union, where there could be little or no affection, would not be compensated for by any rank or wealth.

Pope has summed up the faults of Addison in his celebrated lines, beginning—



“ But were there one whose fires  
 True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires,  
 Bless'd with each talent and each art to please,  
 And born to write, converse, and live with ease ;  
 Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,  
 Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,  
 View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,  
 And hate for arts that caus'd himself to rise ;  
 Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,  
 And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer ;  
 Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike,  
 Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike ;  
 Alike reserv'd to blame or to commend ;  
 A tim'rous foe, and a suspicious friend ;  
 Dreading ev'n fools ; by flatterers besieged,  
 And so obliging, that he ne'er oblig'd :  
 Like Cato, give his little senate laws,  
 And sit attentive to his own applause ;  
 While wits and templars ev'ry sentence raise,  
 And wonder with a foolish face of praise.  
 Who would not grieve if such a man there be ?  
 Who would not laugh if ADDISON were he ?

The virtues of so eminent a man must not, however, be forgotten, because, in common with other men, his character exhibits many of the follies and the vices of our nature. He was the strenuous advocate of virtue and morality ; he attacked with resolution all the meaner vices that disgraced the manners of the higher classes ; and in his own person he set an example of integrity while in office, and of consistency when out, that it would be well if every statesman were to imitate. Notwithstanding what has been before related of his behaviour to Steel, he seldom refused to oblige his friends with the loan of money when they required it ; and it is recorded, that having lent some money to an acquaintance who generally opposed his opinion on a particular subject, and finding that his friend, when they afterwards discussed the question, did not oppose him as before, because he felt himself under an obligation, Addison is said to have told him, “ that he must either pay him the money, or dispute with him as formerly.”

The literary works of Addison for some time after his death, received a greater share of attention and praise than

they were entitled to, and now they appear to be proportionably neglected. Yet in them we shall find the observations of a mind richly endowed with learning, and attentively observant of what was passing in the world around. "To teach the minuter decencies and inferior duties, to regulate the practice of daily conversation, to correct those depravities which are rather ridiculous than criminal, and remove those grievances which, if they produce no lasting calamities, impress hourly vexation," was the particular province of Addison, and that he was successful, no one acquainted with the history of the times when he wrote will presume to deny. To sum up his literary character in the words of his biographer, Johnson, "As a describer of life and manners, he must be allowed to stand, perhaps, the first of the first rank. His humour, which as Steele observes, is peculiar to himself, is so happily diffused as to give the grace of novelty to domestic scenes and daily occurrences. He never "outsteps the modesty of nature," nor raises merriment or wonder by the violation of truth. His figures neither divert by distortion, nor amaze by aggravation. He copies life with so much fidelity, that he can be hardly said to invent; yet his exhibitions have an air so much original, that it is difficult to suppose them not merely the product of imagination. As a teacher of wisdom, he may be confidently followed. His religion has nothing in it enthusiastic or superstitious; he appears neither weakly, credulous, nor wantonly sceptical; his morality is neither dangerously lax, nor impracticably rigid. All the enchantment of fancy, and all the cogency of argument, are employed to recommend to the reader his real interest, the care of pleasing the author of his being. Truth is shown sometimes as the phantom of a vision; sometimes appears half veiled in an allegory; sometimes attracts regard in the robes of fancy, and sometimes steps forth in the confidence of reason. She wears a thousand dresses, and in all is pleasing." A man who could produce works to merit such applause as this, is entitled to have them earnestly recommended to the notice of the young, and with this recommendation we conclude our short biography.

## GRAY.

THE author of the celebrated "Elegy written in a Country Church-yard," THOMAS GRAY, was born in Cornhill, Nov. 26, 1716. His father, who intended him for one of the liberal professions, bestowed much pains on his Education; and after he had been some time at a classical school, sent him to Eton to complete his studies. Here he became acquainted with Horace Walpole, with whom on leaving college he travelled for some time on the continent. At Florence they quarrelled and parted; Johnson says, "Mr. Walpole is content to have it told that it was by his fault." If we look, however, without prejudice in the world, we shall find that men whose consciousness of their own merits sets them above the compliances of servility, are apt enough in their association with superiors to watch their own dignity with troublesome and punctillious jealousy, and in the fervour of independence to exact that attention which they refuse to pay." However this may be in many instances, it is certain that Gray's general disposition will relieve him from the imputation. After returning to England his father died, and Gray finding his resources insufficient to enable him to enter on a profession with success, he determined to retire to Cambridge, where he shortly became bachelor of civil law. He now first commenced the cultivation of his poetical talents, and in the course of the year 1742 produced the "Prospect of Eton College;" "Ode on Spring;" and "Ode to Adversity." Gray's prevailing fault was a species of indolence that prevented the active exercise of his talents, and deprived the world of many intellectual treasures which would most probably have been produced, had poverty or a desire for fame stimulated him strongly; and therefore although the three poems just mentioned were produced within a year, his other works were published at considerable intervals. His "Elegy," by which he is best known to the English reader, and of which it has been said "had he often written in a similar manner, it had been vain to blame, and useless to praise him," was not published till 1750. It was com-



pleted long before that period, and was privately circulated amongst the author's friends. By some means it was printed in a periodical publication with many errors, and Gray then felt himself called upon to publish it with his name. This beautiful poem soon attracted general attention, and brought him before the public. It was universally admired for the simple and natural feelings it expressed, no less than for the appropriate language in which they were conveyed. Gray's reputation as a poet was now so well established, that the office of Poet Laureate was offered him, which he thought proper to decline. He applied, however, for the professorship of history at Cambridge; but Lord Bute could not or would not accede to his request. Subsequently, on the death of the professor, it was offered to him without solicitation, and he accepted it. Ill health, however, prevented him attending to the duties; and although he formed an excellent syllabus for a course of lectures, he was from some cause or other continually prevented from commencing them. At length he was seized with a severe fit of the gout, which attacking his stomach, terminated his life on the 30th of July, 1771, in the fifty-fifth year of his age.

The life of a man who continues during nearly the whole of his days abstracted from the world within the walls of a university, can present but few incidents to render his biography interesting; and such is the case with Gray. During the time he resided at the university he was exempt from poverty, and the cares attendant on it, which are generally the portion of the Poet; he was therefore favourably situated for the exercise of his talents; but it appears that in most cases an active stimulus is required in order to excite the intellect to continued action. Poets and other writers who have been blessed with affluence, produce works remarkable for elegance and care; but it is only the strong pressure of pecuniary want that induces continued literary exertion, and to their unfortunate circumstances we are indebted for the works of Burns, Goldsmith, Sir Walter Scott, and many more of our most celebrated writers. Gray would probably have written more had he

been strongly stimulated to do so ; but having a sufficient income to supply his wants, and being satisfied with the portion of fame he obtained, his "Elegy," and one or two minor poems, are the only evidences of his genius he has left behind.

A friend describes him as "perhaps the most learned man in Europe. He was equally acquainted with the elegant and profound parts of science, and that not superficially but thoroughly." It is not genius alone that makes the poet ; unless Gray had possessed a vast fund of general information he could never have adorned his poetry with the beautiful allusions and similies with which it abounds. He knew every branch of history, both natural and civil ; had read all the original historians of England, France, and Italy ; and was a great antiquarian. Criticism, metaphysics, morals, and politics, made a principal part of his study ; voyages and travels of every kind were his favourite amusements, and he had a fine taste in painting, prints, architecture, and gardening. With such a fund of knowledge his conversation must have been equally instructive and entertaining ; but he was also a good man, a man of virtue and humanity. He is said to have paid his esteem to none whom he did not believe to be good as well as wise.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,  
Heaven did a recompence as largely send ;  
He gave misery all he had, a tear ;  
He gained from heaven, 'twas all he wished, a friend !

No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode ;  
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),  
The bosom of his father and his God.

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### GOLDSMITH.

THERE are few men who have been more neglected during life, or have received greater literary honours after death, than poor Goldsmith—the bookseller's hack—the literary drudge, and yet the writer of the sweetest prose and verse

to be found in the English language. His life conveys the strongest moral lesson we can place before the young, for nearly all the many and bitter miseries he was forced to undergo were occasioned by a weakness of mind, that unfortunately he was never taught in early life to overcome, and which in consequence rendered his splendid talents of but little use in increasing his happiness, while the possession of them gave an additional pang to every misfortune he endured.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was the son of a poor Irish clergyman, and was born on the 10th of November, 1728, at Pallismore, in Longford, Ireland. He received the first rudiments of his education at a dame school in the village of Lissoy, the original of "Sweet Auburn, loveliest village of the plain;" from whence he was sent to a "Commercial Academy," his father having determined on bringing him up to some useful trade. Subsequently, however, he was induced to send young Oliver to Trinity College, Dublin, to prepare for the church. The father's fortune having considerably diminished, Goldsmith, in order to remain at the college, was obliged to remain as a "Sizer,"—a poor student who would not have to pay many of the fees required of the richer collegians; but who was obliged to undertake many menial employments, such for example as cleaning the courts of the college and carrying up the dinner for the fellows. Oliver was a lad of high spirit, who most unwillingly remained on terms like these; but for the sake of his family he submitted without complaint. His tutor, however, was a man of a harsh and unbending disposition, and rendered his situation as unpleasant as it could be; ultimately he was the occasion of Goldsmith's leaving college under the following circumstances:—Goldsmith had gained an academic honour for which there were numerous competitors, and was so delighted with his victory that he invited a party of young people of both sexes to a supper and dance in his chambers. His tutor astounded with the noise of the unlawful fiddle, entered the room, expostulated with Goldsmith, and probably receiving an intemperate answer, inflicted personal chastisement



on him before his friends. This insult produced such an effect upon Goldsmith, that the next morning he sold off all his things, quitted the university, and resolved to embark for America. The great vice of Goldsmith's character was *thoughtlessness*; he never considered the future, as will be seen hereafter, and the last as well as the first misfortune of his life proceeded from this unfortunate characteristic. Instead of proceeding to carry his intention into execution, he loitered about Dublin until he had only a single shilling left, and then set out for Cork. On this shilling he supported himself for three days, and then having sold most of his raiment was reduced to such extremity, that after fasting twenty-four hours, he thought a handful of grey peas given him by a girl at a wake, the most comfortable repast he had ever made. He subsequently applied to his brother, who effected a reconciliation between him and his tutor, and he returned to college. This he left at twenty-one, and then lived with his mother for two years before applying to be ordained; during this time he added little to his accomplishments, except a knowledge of the French language, which however proved of eminent service to him in after life. When the time came for him to be examined previous to ordination, with his usual thoughtlessness, without considering that a certain kind of dress only was suitable for a clergyman, he thought proper to make his appearance in a pair of *scarlet breeches*, with the other portions of his dress corresponding; this in a great measure determined the diocesan against him. He never essayed again to pass the examination, probably he felt himself unfit for the duties of a clergyman; it is certain that he participated in amusements but little befitting the clerical character, since "he was long remembered, among other things, as the gainer of a prize *for throwing the sledge-hammer* at the fair of Ballymahon!" He was always vain of his muscular strength, and frequently when more advanced in years was fond of exhibiting it. He afterwards was sent by his friends at the age of twenty-four to the university of Edinburgh, to study medicine; but left it without obtaining a

degree, being in fear of arrest for a debt of a friend, for whom he had become answerable.

Goldsmith then proceeded to Leyden in Holland, where he remained about a year. At this time he was often in much distress, and to increase his finances had recourse to the gaming-table, by which however he does not appear to have realized anything, and at last was obliged to borrow a sum of money from a kind friend to enable him to return to Ireland. Again, however, he was guilty of an act of thoughtless and foolish generosity, productive of the most serious consequences. Before leaving Leyden he happened to strolé into a florist's garden, where observing some very fine tulips, and remembering his uncle Contarine's love of them, he purchased on the spot a quantity of roots to be sent to Ireland. This effort of "affectionate gratitude" again reduced him so low that he ultimately quitted Leyden with scarcely any money, and but one clean shirt. He determined, however, to make the tour of Europe on foot, and having a competent knowledge of French he proceeded at once to carry his intention into execution.

The manner in which he performed this tour he has himself described in the "History of a Philosophic Vagabond," in his inimitable *Vicar of Wakefield*. He could play upon the flute with much sweetness, and he used to gather a little money in the evening by performing on that instrument in the public streets. He received much kindness also from the monks and Irish priests in Italy, and is supposed when he left France to have been engaged as tutor to a young English gentleman. When he landed at Dover, however, in February, 1756, he was in a state of great distress, and a week afterwards was soliciting employment at the druggists in London. He had written a portion of his "Traveller" while on the continent, but he could procure nothing for it from the publishers, and he was ultimately glad to obtain a menial situation at an obscure druggist's at the corner of Bell Yard, near the Monument. Here he met with an old fellow-student at Edinburgh, and by his means was enabled to set up as a physician; an extraordinary change from his late employment

but he had obtained a degree at a university abroad. His finances, however, were hardly sufficient to enable him to dress as become his station; he is said to have been seen "in a shirt and neckcloth which he must have worn for a fortnight," and having purchased second-hand a green velvet coat laced with gold, he afterwards discovered to his mortification (for he had forgotten to examine it closely when it was purchased) that it had an "unseemly patch" over the left breast, and one of his patients was highly amused when, after several visits, he discovered why the doctor always placed his hat on this particular spot while delivering an opinion. He afterwards obtained a situation on the recommendation of Richardson the author of "Clarissa," as reader and corrector of the press, with which employment he engaged his leisure time. In a short time, however, so little did he gain by both these employments, that he was glad to accept the situation of usher at a school at Peckham. Here he appears to have been treated with much kindness; but the rudeness of the boys and many little unpleasant circumstances he was obliged to submit to, made him determine to quit his situation. The principal reason he assigned, in his usual simple and unreserved language was, "that he was obliged to sleep on the same pillow with a Frenchman, who stunk him dead with rancid pomatums." He subsequently returned to the school, and was introduced by the master, Mr. Milner, to the conductor of the "Monthly Review," by whom he was engaged to write for it, and received into his house. Goldsmith left him at the end of a twelvemonth, and then obtained a precarious existence by writing for the magazines. He found time also to prepare his "Enquiry into the State of Polite Literature in Europe," and obtained several small sums in advance on it to relieve his urgent necessities, from Dodsley the printer.

Having been strongly urged to endeavour to obtain a permanent situation, he applied to some friends connected with the East India Company, who agreed to procure him the office of apothecary to one of their ships, if he could pass the examination at Surgeons' Hall; on being exam-



ined, however, he was found not qualified. In order to appear before the examiners, he had been obliged to borrow a suit of clothes, for which the conductor of the "Monthly Review" had become answerable, on condition of their being returned the next day. Goldsmith, however, on his return home pawned the clothes to relieve some pressing necessity, and for this act had to submit to much insult and even abuse from the lender. It has since been discovered that very probably the reason that induced him to commit an act so much resembling dishonesty, was in order to relieve the landlord of the house where he lived from gaol; he having been taken in execution for some paltry sum.

Goldsmith lived at this time in Green Arbour Court, Old Bailey; then, as at present, a miserable collection of houses occupied only by the poorest poor. To convey some idea of the wretchedness of the unfortunate Goldsmith at this period, Malone relates, that on visiting him, "he found him employed in writing his 'Enquiry into Polite Literature,' in a wretchedly dirty room in which there was but one chair; and when from civility this was offered to his visitor, he himself was obliged to sit on the window. While they were conversing, some one rapped gently at the door, and on being desired to come in, a poor ragged little girl of very decent behaviour entered, who dropping a courtesy, said, "My mamma sends her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend her a potfull of coals.' "

To appease Griffiths for the loss of his clothes, Goldsmith wrote the "Life of Voltaire," and subsisted on the various small sums he received for the different kinds of literary labour he undertook. This was of the most varied description, and he laboured incessantly. The works published in his name have generally led to the belief that he composed slowly, and corrected with great care; so that his productions were masterpieces, and owe their excellence to the length of time they took to complete. But in fact, Goldsmith was the hardest-worked literary drudge ever employed by printer or publisher. He compiled histories and biographies, produced an elaborate history of animated nature, wrote for the magazines and the "Public Ledger,"

composed essays and scraps of poetry, and even laboured for the amusement of children. Amongst the rest it is believed the "History of Goody Two Shoes" is the product of his pen; Mr. Newberry, of St. Paul's Church Yard, the publisher of children's books, having frequently employed him on works for juvenile persons. It is also recorded, that while in Dublin, when hard pressed for a few shillings, he used to sit down and write some street ballads, for which he could always obtain five shillings from the printer of "dying speeches;" and he would afterwards wander about to hear his own productions sung by the street-singers, whom he generally rewarded if they pleased him by their exertions.

In Green Arbour Court he produced the "Citizen of the World," and several other productions that introduced him to the notice of Johnson, Burke, and many other eminent men. He then removed to more respectable lodgings in Wine-office court, Fleet-street, but here he became so much embarrassed, that he was arrested for a trifling debt, and was only relieved by Johnson selling the copyright of the "Vicar of Wakefield" to Mr. Newberry for 60*l*. This work had been his consolation and amusement for a twelvemonth. He composed it with care, after he finished his literary drudgery for the day; but an unfavourable opinion was entertained of it when first offered to the booksellers. Poor Goldsmith had probably many times endeavoured to dispose of it without success, and it was only the favourable opinion of Dr. Johnson, and the peculiar circumstances of the author, that induced Newberry at last to purchase it. He then allowed it to lay by him for two years before he printed it; but the publication of "The Traveller" raised the fame of Goldsmith so much, that the "Vicar of Wakefield" appeared immediately afterwards, and was most favourably received. Shortly afterwards he produced "The Deserted Village," for which he received 100*l*., and being now somewhat improved in circumstances, he removed to No. 2, Brick-court, Temple, the most respectable lodgings he had while living in London. His thoughtless expenditure and foolish generosity, however,

involved him in pecuniary difficulties of the most painful description ; he struggled against his troubles for a long time, till the despondency of his mind brought on a low nervous fever, which terminated his life on the 4th of April, 1774, at the early age of forty-five. He was buried in the Temple Church.

As an illustration of the character of Goldsmith, and his simple yet effective and beautiful style of composition, nothing can be more suitable than the following extracts from a letter which he addressed to his brother, when about to proceed to India in the Company's service, as before mentioned, but which he was prevented doing in consequence of not being found qualified. He says, " I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East India voyage, nor are my resolutions altered ; though at the same time I must confess, it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study, have worn one down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me, yet I dare venture to say, that if a stranger saw us both, he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eye-brows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig, and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child.

" Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink ; have contracted a hesitating disagreeable manner of speak-



ing, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it." He continues with some advice regarding the education of his brother's son, of which he might well have said, "May *he* better reckon the reed, than ere did the adviser." He says, without much reason, seeing that the most beautiful moral lesson conveyed by the "Vicar of Wakefield," was in the form of a novel, "Above all things let him never touch a romance or novel: these paint beauty in colours more charming than nature, and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept. Take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous—may distress, but cannot relieve him. Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach then, my dear sir, to your son, thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eye."

The great want of poor Goldsmith was the possession of the two qualities he here so strongly recommends, probably with greater earnestness, because he felt the want of them poignantly. He was a man of the most unbounded benevolence and generosity; he would frequently expose himself to every kind of inconvenience, and even misery, to relieve others; and the "cool designing beings" with whom he associated, knew his foible, and took a base advantage of his weakness. Had he had instilled into his mind in early life that generosity to others will never recompence injustice to ourselves, and had he been blessed with a companion whose prudence would have been an antidote to

his own excess of thoughtlessness, Goldsmith would have been amongst the happiest of the human race. His animal spirits supported him under every privation, and when at last he lost his cheerfulness, his grave was being made.

As a writer he is a universal favourite. His genius pleases as many varied tastes as it was itself diversified. As a poet, a novelist, an essayist, a biographer, or even as a compiler from the works of others, he has left behind him productions that have never been surpassed. And his biography teaches us a moral lesson that we should all do well to bear in mind.

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The lives of the other poets who have monuments in the Abbey, are not remarkable for any particular circumstances that require to be noticed at length. COWLEY was a favourite writer in the time of Charles II., and displayed extraordinary talent in his early years. BEAUMONT was a celebrated dramatic writer, and his productions at one time were more esteemed than Shakspeare's. A curious literary partnership existed between him and Fletcher, another dramatic writer, and their plays are called by their joint names, as it is not known what portions each composed. PHILLIPS, the author of "The Splendid Shilling," was a poet who produced little else worthy of notice, and of whom little is known. PRIOR was much esteemed at the time he lived, in the reign of William and Mary, and many of his poems being free from the artificial style so much adopted in that age, are still admired. THOMSON is well known for his beautiful poem on the Seasons, but his life presents few incidents of an interesting description. He was remarkable for great indolence occasionally, which was the most prominent trait in his character. GAY is known to old and young by his fables; he was neglected a good deal by his friends in power, but his circumstances prevented him feeling many of the miseries that are too often the lot of the poet.





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